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# KASHMIR IN CRUCIBLE

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## BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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AZAD KASHMIR

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To My Parents
Who Encouraged Tolerance, Patience and Balance

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First Published : May 1967
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Printed at The Gutenberg Printing Works and Published by Kanwal Kishore for Pamposh Publications, New Delhi-16.
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# KASHMIR IN CRUCIBLE

PREM NATH BAZAZ

PAMPOSH PUBLICATIONS,
E-38, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-16, India

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My sole hope and prayer is that Kashmir should become a beaconlight to the benighted subcontinent.

**Mahatma Gandhi**

The strongest bonds that bind will not be of your armies or even of your Constitution to which so much reference has been made, but bonds which are stronger than constitution and laws and armies—bonds that bind through love and affection and understanding.

**Jawaharlal Nehru**

Kashmir is in a crucible and its future complexion is in the process of being built up. History has confronted the State people with an unprecedented crisis which also provides them with a rare opportunity. The crisis can end in a disaster or a unique triumph depending upon the attitude that is adopted to meet the situation. Led by demagogues, impatient men or self-seekers who make mountains of mole hills, the State may fall apart and cause the disintegration of the Indian Republic bringing ruin to Asian democracy in its wake.

If, on the other hand, better counsels prevail with those who guide public opinion in the three regions (Jammu, Kashmir Valley & Ladakh) there can be no insurmountable obstacle in the way of building a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-racial democratic state with goodwill and cooperation, making allowances for each other's sentiments and respecting the human dignity of all. It will be an unparalleled achievement of which not only the State people but every Indian will feel proud ; for Kashmir will then have defended the principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution and disproved the two-nation theory that continues to sap the vitality of democracy in India and Pakistan.

**Prem Nath Bazaz**

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## FOREWORD

Notwithstanding the oft-repeated statement of the Indian leaders that the Jammu and Kashmir State has finally and irrevocably acceded to the Union, Kashmir continues to be a baffling problem and a solution acceptable to all the parties concerned has eluded the understanding of world statesmen.

The problem is the baby born of the partition of the Indian subcontinent.

Although I opposed on various grounds the partition in pre-1947 days, I have no hesitation in confessing that when independence was achieved and the country divided on religious basis, I believed there was no alternative for the State, at any rate for those areas of it which were predominantly populated by the Muslims, but to accede to Pakistan. Influenced by subsequent developments, my views have undergone a change though on basic issue of democracy they remain unaltered. Considering the deep animosity that the tussle has generated between the two countries and the bloodshed, misery and colossal loss of life and property it has caused, the view still held in certain sections of world public that Kashmir's accession to Pakistan would have been the right decision, may not be summarily dismissed as a facet of anti-Indian prejudice. For with the completion of the religious division of the subcontinent perhaps things might have settled down by now and the two countries peacefully engaged in pursuit of economic betterment and happiness of the 600 poverty-stricken millions living in them.

But at the time of independence forces mostly noxious were at work to disallow the history to take that course: hunger for power of National Conference leaders which they thought could be satisfied only by accession to India, the warlike designs of communalist sections among the Muslims, the ardent desire of the Congress leaders to give another fight to the two-nation

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theory which had, at least for the time being, emerged triumphant, and, worst of all, the stupidity of Pakistan leaders in despatching unruly tribesmen to invade Kashmir, combined to compel the hesitant Maharaja to hastily take a decision favouring the State's future affiliation with India. The legal requirements under the provisions of the Independence Act of British Parliament having been met, Kashmir became legally and constitutionally a part of the Indian Union like hundreds of other princely states.

Nineteen years have gone by when this fateful decision was made. 1966 is not 1947; many billion tons of water have flown beneath the bridges of the Vitasta during this period of great trials and tribulations, stresses and strains. To talk of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan in the year of grace 1966 as logical in view of the principle underlying partition or to lay undue stress on the demand for right of self-determination is unrealistic. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the future of Kashmir cannot be assumed to have been finally settled by reference to fulfilment of legal or constitutional requirements when the settlement lacks the support of the State people. An enduring solution of the problem, it should be obvious, must be acceptable to a large majority of the Kashmiris.

In all attempts that have been made in the past years in pursuit of a settlement, Pakistan and India were recognised as the parties to the dispute; the Kashmiris were treated no better than pawns in a game of territorial acquisition. However, the long-drawn discussions and acrimonious controversies revealed that no common ground existed between the two contenders and the repeated endeavours for a settlement ended in failure.

Having completely lost hope in a satisfactory outcome of negotiations with Pakistan, thoughtful sections in India have started a search for a fresh approach to the problem. An awareness seems to be growing that in the final analysis what matters is a healthy public opinion in Jammu and Kashmir; therefore increasing attention should be devoted to its cultivation than to what is happening elsewhere. Some



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top-ranking Indian leaders, including President Radhakrishnan, have solemnly declared that the difficulties facing Kashmiris have to be removed to end the problem. This book is a modest contribution to the earnest search in which all politically conscious and thinking sections in this country are directly or indirectly engaged.

A solution to be abiding should fulfil certain essential conditions : it should not be imposed on the State people ; it should be compatible with the fundamental principles of democracy and should not transgress the accepted canons of social justice ; it should be such as to inspire confidence in the different linguistic and religious minorities that they will be secure under the new setup. Above all, the solution should not cause any widespread disturbances in any part of the subcontinent.

The cases of India and Pakistan with regard to the disputed territory may be briefly stated : India is by no means ready to give up the territory on her side of the cease-fire line but is also, on the strength of the instrument of accession, persistently laying claim to the areas of the State which have come to be known as Azad Kashmir. Pakistan leaders hold with one voice that because of its Muslim majority, the entire State should form a part of their homeland. Neither of these demands, if accepted, can fulfil the essential conditions. It is inconceivable that if the rule of India is extended to Azad Kashmir any Government in Pakistan can survive the public fury raised in that country by the change ; it will certainly and directly lead to war. And if the State or even the Kashmir Valley falls to Pakistan the forces of disruption in India already by no means insignificant will overwhelm this country. Therefore, safety lies in maintaining the cease-fire line as it is ; indeed, it has to be transformed into an international boundary. But in her present mood Pakistan will not agree to the proposal and it cannot be implemented unilaterally by a fiat of the Indian Government. There, however, is a way to achieve this aim provided India can enlist the voluntary support of the Kashmiris.

There can be little doubt that the Dogra Hindus of Jammu and the Lama Buddhists of Ladakh steadfastly support



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State's accession to India; only the people in the Valley are wavering in their loyalty. The Valley thus becomes the pivot on which rests the conversion of the cease-fire line into international border. That explains why the discussion in this book is confined to the Valley and does not cover the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir; only in the last chapter while discussing "The Way Out" has a notice been taken of the Jammu and Ladakh issues.

The population of the Valley is composed of six per cent Hindu Brahmins popularly known as Pandits and the ninety-four percent Muslims. That the Valley stays with India should serve as a guarantee that the tiny minority has no reason to feel insecure or have apprehensions about the future. But some means have to be devised to give tangible assurances to the Muslims that their political, economic as well as cultural interests are in safe hands. It is the theme of this book that by providing for autonomy to the State within the framework of the Indian Constitution to the extent acceptable to the majority community the support for the accession will be forthcoming.

Obviously a compromise between the two extreme claims, this solution will be vigorously opposed by the ultra-nationalist Hindus on the one side and communalist Muslims on the other. But I believe it is being progressively realized in the Valley, at any rate by thoughtful men and women, that by insisting on the fulfilment of their respective demands the two communities will make any realistic settlement impossible to attain, allowing the prevailing hardships and sufferings to perpetuate.

The Hindu opposition to autonomy is driving the Kashmir Muslims into the camp of the secessionists and Muslim insistence upon severance of ties with India is inducing non-Muslims (Dogras, Pandits and Buddhists) to fight tooth and nail any plan of democratisation of the State Establishment.

Therefore sensible realism and not misplaced idealism, should inform a solution which of course should be in tune with the cultural heritage and national character of the two communities.



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As long as Kashmir Muslims are dissatisfied, sullen and resentful Pakistan has a moral case and cannot be expected to keep silent. The way to shut her mouth is not to discredit, denounce or threaten her by clumsy tricks or subtle propaganda but by removing the genuine grievances and well-founded apprehensions of the Kashmiris. Once this is done, Pakistan will see her way to come to an honourable understanding with India over the dispute.

Kashmir problem is much older than the accession issue which cropped up in 1947. Ever since the British imperialists sold the Valley to Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846, the problem has presented itself in one shape or another. For over eighty years the Dogra Hindu rulers could contrive to conceal the hideous truth that their subjects, predominant majority of whom was Muslim, were unhappy under their harsh rule. But when in 1931 the Kashmiris rose in open rebellion against the despotism the problem was posed in public for the first time. After independence the issue has in essence remained unchanged, namely, the scope of freedom for the State Muslims under majority Hindu rule.

As long ago as 1932 my analysis of State politics led me to the conclusion that Muslim aspiration for freedom from autocratic yoke was no communal issue. A Kashmiri is neither a bigot nor a religious zealot, but he is a man of flesh and blood; he therefore pines for human sympathy; only when he is refused the decencies of life he is forced to be disloyal and to revolt.

In the long period of over thirty-four years I have had exchange of views on the vexing issue with leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru as also a large number of Kashmiri politicians and patriots. From time to time I expressed my views on State affairs in the context of Kashmir's historical background and a rising wave of democracy. I tried to elicit the opinions of the great leaders which they stated, at times with candour, in their letters. Those in disagreement with me in Kashmir have subjected my views to a close scrutiny thereby presenting other aspects of the problem not dealt with by me. Since this correspondence



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(comprising selected letters from a big bunch) throws revealing light on the theme of the book, I have included it as appendices at the end.

In the preparation of this volume I have heavily drawn on the writings of several authors, ancient and modern. I owe a debt of gratitude to them all.

My thanks are due to S. C. Malik who read parts of the manuscript before it went to the press. I am thankful to friends for the assistance they have given me in different ways in collecting data used in the book ; particularly I remain beholden to G. N. Khayal and Nand Lal Wattal who provided me the material on which the chapter on contemporary writers and artists of Kashmir is based. I have also to thank Miss Annie Mathews who undertook the typing work of the manuscript.

New Delhi.

Prem Nath Bazaz



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## CHAPTER ONE

# THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Perhaps nowhere else in the world has nature been so kind and benevolent to people as in Kashmir. From the ancient indigenous poets who composed sweet lyrics in praise of their homeland to the casual visitor of today there is none who has failed to appreciate the grandeur of the romantic scenery, the awe-inspiring mountains laden with eternal snows that surround the Valley, bewitching landscapes that meet the eye wherever we go, lovely serpentine rivulets, unruffled lakes with crystal clear waters, deep blue skies, evergreen forests, unending white sheets of snow in winter, fragrant flowers and succulent fruits in summer, besides the superb climate that enlivens the anaemic and invigorates the lethargic. "Neither the natural beauty nor the delicious climate of the valley has been exaggerated in the books which I have read and every year's residence in the valley discloses some new charm and new interest", wrote Sir W.R. Lawrence who lived in Kashmir for a few years as the Settlement Commissioner of the State during the early nineties of the last century[1].

[1] Sir Walter R. Lawrence : *The Valley of Kashmir :* Henry Frowd, Oxford University Press, Warehouse, London. p. 14.

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Nestled in the bosom of the mighty Himalayas the beautiful Valley is a cradle where a race of healthy, intellectual and vigorous men can rise and flourish. In a profusely illustrated work, *Kashmir*, Sir Francis Younghusband, a British Resident, wrote in 1912:

> The beautiful Greece with its purple hills and varied contour, its dancing seas and clear blue sky, produced the graceful Greeks. But Kashmir is more beautiful than Greece. It has the same blue sky and brilliant sunshine, but its purple hills are on a far grander scale, and if it has no seas, it has lakes and rivers, and the still more snowy mountains. It has too a greater variety of natural scenery, of field and forest, of rugged mountain and open valley. And to me who have seen both the countries, Kashmir seems much more likely to impress a race by its natural beauty.[2]

We do not have sufficient data about the living conditions of the Kashmiris in the pre-historic or ancient times. Kalhana, the celebrated historian, has carefully recorded the annals of Kashmir for nearly four thousand years down to his own days in 1149 A.D. But his narration of the events before the sixth century is generally brief, vague and unreliable. He tells us very little about the social patterns under which the ancients lived and had their being. To form any accurate idea about the achievements or the failings of the Kashmiris who lived in the hoary past we have mostly to depend on the findings of the present-day archaeologists and the antiquarians. Most of what the ancients produced in their times in the realm of architecture, literature or fine arts has perished either through the wrath of elements or at the hands of vandals. But whatever little remains in ruins speaks volumes to witness the heights that had been scaled by the Kashmiris in those forgotten times. Writing about these achievements Sir Alexander Cunningham, the British antiquarian, said :

> The superiority of the Kashmirian architecture over all other Indian buildings would appear to have been known to the Hindus themselves, for one of their names for the people of Kashmir is Shastra-Shilpina or "architects" a term which could have been applied to them on account of their well-known skill in building. Even now the Kashmiris are the most expert handicraftsmen of the East and it is not difficult to believe that the same people who at present excel all other orientals as weavers, goldsmiths, and as

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[2] Sir Francis Younghusband, *Kashmir*, (1909) Adam and Charles Black, London, p. 133

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caligraphers, must have been the most eminent of the Indian architects.[3]

Under good government in bygone times the deep blue sky, the green landscapes, the high mountains, the rivers and the lakes did inspire the Kashmiris to perform great deeds and achieve lofty ideals. Surveying these accomplishments Sir Francis Younghusband observed :

It is at Martand that there is the finest, and as it is not only typical of Kashmir architecture at its best, but is built on the most sublime site occupied by any building in the world—finer than the site of the Partheon or of the Taj, or of St. Peters or of the Escurial,—we may take it as the representative, or rather the culmination of all the rest, and by it we must judge the people of Kashmir at their best.[4]

### *Political Vicissitudes*

Had natural environment been the sole or even the decisive factor in moulding and shaping the character of a race the Kashmiris should have been an ideal people; they should have uninterruptedly continued to produce lovely things in the domain of art and architecture and risen from one height to the other. But, fortunate in having a beautiful homeland, they have been not so fortunate in their rulers who frequently were tyrants and cruel men.

"Kashmir is a land on which God has showered his blessings in the making, where the earth is good and can be made to grow much food, yet many of its people are near starvation," said Pearce Gervis, "a land where the finest silks and the softest wools are spun and woven into cloth, yet most of its people are clad in rags ; a land where precious stones are to be found, yet few of its people possess any; a land in which 'the men are strong and the women as fruitful as the soil,' being those of many basic cultures and creeds. A land which writers have described as 'the happy valley,' yet only those who visit it are happy, not those who dwell therein."[5]

Barring that part of early Kashmir history about which adequate information is not available, the story of the

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[3] Major General Sir Alexander Cunningham, *Archaeological Reports*, 1833 to 1834, Vol. 23, p. 165

[4] Ibid, p. 135.

[5] Pearce Gervis, *This is Kashmir*, p. xv.

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Kashmiris is nothing but a melancholy tale of perpetual misgovernment by monarchs and their underlings. We may open any book of chronicles written by the sons of the soil from Kalhana in 1149 A.D. to Hassan in 1893 A.D., we cannot help lamenting that the poor people never enjoyed even a century of continued peace. It is true there have appeared such illustrious and celebrated rulers as Meghvahana, Lalitaditya, Avantivarman, Shahab-ud-din and Zain-ul-abidin who made the people prosperous and happy but such periods were like brief sunshine in the dreary cold winter of maladministration spreading over hundreds of years.

Clothed in exquisite verse and a humane philosophy of Kalhana are the black deeds of scores of kings who ascended the "lion throne" of Kashmir from sixth century to the poet's own days. It is a disgusting account of the bestiality and savagery of mean men and low born adventurers with no principles to guide them and no scruples to restrain them. To what depths the kings of this period could descend may be known by what the Historian wrote about King Unmattavanti (939-944 A.D.): "Instigated by wicked advisers the king practised the use of arms splitting with throws of daggers the hollows between the breasts of naked women. He also ripped open the abdomen of pregnant women in order to see the foetus."[6]

### *Hindu Rule in Decline*

Of the comparatively good monarchs of these centuries Lalitaditya (697 to 738 A.D.) is adjudged to be the best and the most renowned. The Kashmiris hold him in great esteem and, indeed, for a long time after his death, Alberuni tells us, a day was celebrated in the Valley to commemorate the deeds of the hero ; for he had raised the country through his adventures, exploits and conquests, to a pitch of glory never reached before. But even he soiled his otherwise unblemished career by a savage deed when one night heavily drunk he ordered that Srinagar be consigned to fire because he could not bear to see

Kalhana : *Rajatarangni*, V, 440.

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the old capital flourishing after Parihaspur, the new city built by him, was in existence.

King Harsha (1089-1101 A.D.) is considered to be one whose rule was characterised by prudence and munificence towards men of learning. He was a lover of arts. But his spendthrift nature and multifarious extravagances involved him in debt. Consequently he was forced to impose all imaginable taxes on the people ; an impost was levied even on night soil ; but still the treasury was unable to meet his needs. He then confiscated the images of gods in temples made of precious stones. "There was not one temple in a village, town or in the city which was not despoiled of its images," moans Kalhana. "He appointed Udayaraja prefect for seizing the divine images. In order to defile the statues of gods he had excrement and urine poured over their faces by naked mendicants whose noses, feet and hands had rotted away. Divine images were dragged along by ropes round their ankles with spit instead of flowers", adds the Historian.[7]

Kashmir throne fell vacant in the latter part of the twelfth century. For the last time in their history the people were called upon to elect a king. Their choice was one Vopyadeva (1171—1180 A.D.) whom they considered intelligent, efficient and able to administer the country well. But he proved a downright idiot. The chronicler, Jonaraja, records : "The king felt happy at the sight of large blocks of stones and ordered his ministers to increase the size of the smaller ones by making them drink milk of beasts".[8]

In the thirteenth century one Rajadeva (1213—1236 A.D.) became the ruler of the Valley whose hobby was to oppress the scholarly Pandits, vanguard of the progressive intellectuals. By cruel torture and indiscriminate plunder the king reduced the Pandits to such a pitiable plight that every member of the community when seized was heard, according to Jonaraja, to pathetically plead : "I am not a Bhatta, I am not a Bhatta".[9] Bhatta in Kashmiri means a Pandit.

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[7] *Rajatarngni* Book VII, 1091-1094

[8] J. C. Dutt : *Kings of Kashmira*, (1879-87) Elm Press, Calcutta, Vol. III, p. 5

[9] Ibid, Vol. III, p. 10

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Thus the normal condition of Kashmir for many centuries during the medieval period when the Hindus ruled the country was a state of perpetual unrest and unstability, of constant fear and misrule, and above all, of unmitigated human suffering.

*Under Muslim Rule*

With the capture, through intrigue and stratagem, of the throne in 1339 A.D. by an upstart courtier, Shah Mirza or Shah Mir as he is usually known, the Muslims came to power. The Kashmiris welcomed the change. For a few years the country became peaceful and hopes of a prosperous future were raised. But not for long; the Valley relapsed into disorder. Sultan Sikander drove the Hindus to desperation by subjecting them to harsh measures. He levied other taxes on them besides the jazia. Even the burning of dead bodies was not allowed without payment of a tax. Sikander got books on philosophy, theology and arts in Sanskrit destroyed by flames "even as fire burns grass." In his fanatical zeal the Sultan took a fancy to demolish all temples in the Valley which symbolized the finest architecture in the country produced by the great Kashmiri masters through ages. "There was no city, no town, no village, no wood," bewails the contemporary historian, Jonaraja, "where the temples of gods were unbroken."[10] The Hindus were neither tolerated in their homeland nor allowed to go abroad. "Struck by fear some Brahmins killed themselves in water, others again by falling from a precipice and others burnt themselves."[11] For his misdeeds Sikander earned the sobriquet of "But Shikan" (idol breaker) or as a Kashmiri calls it "Buthi Shigun."

Undoubtedly Zain-ul-abidin, endearingly called Bud Shah (Great King), was a benevolent monarch who shines resplendently in this dreary period, but his son, Haider Shah, drunkard and profligate, revived the traditions of misgovernment. In his time an ignorant barber, Riktetara, gained official patronage and notoriety. Killing of innocent men by ordinary methods

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10 *Kings of Kashmira* Vol iii, p. 59

11 Ibid, p. 60.

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did not satiate his hunger for torture. His victims were high and humble, poor and wealthy. "The relentless and sinful barber" says Srivara, "cut off the Thakuras and the courtiers of the king's father by the saw."[12] He impaled his victims on the roadside. For three days and nights the unfortunate men lived like this shrieking till death ended their agony.

Conditions showed no improvement after the death of Haider Shah. There was a long drawn struggle for throne between two kings, Mohammed Shah and Fath Shah, from 1484 to 1516. By turns they captured the throne for short durations, the former three times and the latter as many as five times. On Fath Shah's accession in 1486 the king allowed foreign mercenaries with whose support he gained power, to plunder the city.[13] During this period Kashmir was involved in a civil war which further enfeebled the people and impoverished them. "There appears to be no cause of lamentation over the displacement of the Shahmiri dynasty in Kashmir." wrote Dr. Ghulam Mohiuddin Sufi, "Its rulers had become quite effete. They sadly lacked the essential qualities of initiative and capacity to command."[14]

Chaks succeeded Shah Miris and ruled over Kashmir for thirty-one years from 1555 to 1586 This period is notable for religious fanaticism, wanton barbarity, insecurity and ruthlessness, the victims mostly being the Sunni Muslims. Excepting Hussain Shah Chak, all other kings of this dynasty were boors and heartless men who simply loved to inflict pain and torture.

With the help of certain Kashmir dignitaries, Akbar conquered the Valley in 1586 after encountering stiff resistence and discomfiture in early attempts. The unhappy people accepted the inevitable and befriended the invaders in the forlorn hope that they will at last get some relief.

The Mughal rule lasted for 166 years. Kashmir now became a province of the Indian empire and was administered

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[12] Ibid, p. 187.

[13] Ibid p. 334

[14] G. M. D. Sufi : *Kashir*, (1949), Punjab University, Lahore. Vol 1, p. 212.

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through governors appointed by the emperors at Delhi. In the last days of the Mughal rule the governors started more an unwholesome practice of deputing their representatives to the Valley while they were themselves engaged in court intrigues at the imperial capital.

Some of the Mughal governors were benevolent, merciful and concientious who took measures to improve the economic and political conditions of the Kashmiris, but there were others particularly those during the declining period of the Mughal rule, who proved merciless despots. They encouraged Hindu-Muslim factions and Shia-Sunni feuds besides levying undue imposts and heavy taxes on the toiling masses which made life hard to live. At the death of Aurangzeb Kashmir was again simmering with unrest. Not only were the people groaning under the unbearable whips of poverty and oppression, acute religious differences were making the matter worse. "Sectarian fights between the Shias and the Sunnis were not uncommon in those days", says Sufi. "Religious feelings were bitter every where."[15]

The more were Mughals involved in dissensions and internal strife at Delhi the less attention could they pay to improve conditions in Kashmir. Ultimately anarchy broke out and there was practically no government in the Valley. At the invitation of some Kashmir nobles, Ahmed Shah Abdali dispatched a small force and easily conquered the land in 1752.

The Afghan rule proved the worst of all the despotisms that the Kashmiris had suffered in their long history. By stealing the last pennies from the pockets of the poverty stricken people and by inventing diabolical methods to torture them, the Pathan subedars made themselves the most despicable of rulers. It was a dismal period unrelieved by any good work, chivalry or honour. Even today the Pathan satraps are remembered in the Valley only for their savagery and inhuman conduct. A Persian couplet quoted about them is: "*Sar buridan pesh in sangin dilan gul chidan ast.*" (These stone hearted people thought no more of cutting heads than of plucking flowers).

The victims of the Pathan ruthlessness were Kashmiris without distinction of religion or caste, but the particular

[15] op. cit, p. 312.

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objects of torture were the Pandits, the Shias and Muslim Bombas of the Jhelum Valley. Governor Asad Khan used to tie up the Pandits, two and two, with rope in grass sacks and sink them in the Dal Lake. As an amusement, a pitcher filled with ordure would be placed on the Pandits' heads and then pelted with stones till it broke, the unfortunate victims being blinded with filth. Governor Mir Hazar, another fiend, used leather bags instead of grass sacks for the drowning. He drowned Shias as well as Brahmins.[16]

The Pathans were followed by the Sikhs in 1819 when at the invitation of Kashmir nobles headed by Birbal Dhar, Ranjit Singh succeeded in annexing the Valley to his expanding dominions. "It must have been an intense relief to all classes in Kashmir to see the downfall of the evil rule of the Pathans and to none was the relief greater than to the peasants, who had been cruelly fleeced by the rapacious sirdars of Kabul,"[17] thought Lawrence. The Kashmiris pinned great hopes on the Sikh rule ; but they were mistaken. William Moorcroft who travelled extensively in the Valley and met people of all shades of opinion in the twenties of the last century when the Sikhs had gained firm possession of the land, noted:

> The village where we stopped was half deserted and the few inhabitants that remained wore the semblance of extreme wretchedness ; without some relief or change of system, it seems probable that this part of the country will soon be without inhabitants.

That relief never came nor did any change of system occur under the Sikhs. Moorcroft added :

> The number of Kashmiris who were to accompany us over the mountains proved here to be no exaggeration and their appearance half naked and miserably emaciated presented a ghastly picture of poverty and starvation.

Summing up his views about the Sikh rule Moorcroft concluded :

> The Sikhs seem to look upon Kashmiris as little better than cattle. The murder of a native by a Sikh is punished by a fine to the Government of from sixteen to twenty rupees, of which four rupees

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16 *The Valley of Kashmir* p. 197

17 Ibid p. 199

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are paid to the family of the deceased if a Hindu, two rupees if he was a Mohammedan.[18]

The Sikhs forbade killlng of cows and any Muslim who was known to have knifed the animal even if it be his own, was hanged or stoned to death. Several Muslim mosques in the Valley were seized and used as godowns.

By the end of Sikh rule in 1846 when the Dogra Rajputs got the Valley as a gift from the British in recognition of services rendered by them during the Anglo-Sikh Wars, the Kashmiris were thoroughly demoralised and lying prostrate at the mercy of any individual who was put at the helm of affairs.[19]

## *Cultural Achievements*

Whatever the political complexion of the State, some Kashmiris remained engrossed in cultural activities through the different periods of their dismal history, creating human values and producing things of artistic beauty. The earlier inhabitants of the Valley lived nearer nature and worshipped its various manifestations. Later, Vedic religion gradually spread among them. Alexander's invasion of Northern India introduced Greek influence in their art and architecture. Buddhism became dominant in the days when Ashoka got hold of the country in 260 B. C., but brahminical counter revolution after the Emperor's death gave a setback to the progress. The clash of ideals and ideas resulted in the fusion of the two cultures in the Valley which gave birth to the Trika philosophy commonly known as Shaivism. This system of thought is the outcome of the blending of the Vedic and Buddhistic cultures, a synthesis of the essential elements that are to be found in almost all the Indian philosophies plus the knowledge gained by the Kashmir thinkers with their own speculations and experiences.

Shaivism was founded by Vasugupta in the 8th century A.D. He wrote *Spanda Karika* which contains the essence of the

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[18] Willian Moorcoft, *Travels in the Himalayan Provinces*, part II chap, ii, pp. 235, 293, 294 (1841), John Murray, London,

[19] Raja Gulab singh had to pay Rs. 75,00,000 to the British to secure the gift according to the terms laid down in the Treaty of Amritsar.

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philosophy in aphorisms. Vasugupta's disciple, Kalatta Bhatta, composed *Spanda Vritti* in the ninth century. Soon after came Somananda father of the Pratyabhijna school with his dazzling treatise, *Shiva drishti*. Utpaladeva whose books *Pratyabhijna* and *Stotravali* are accorded a place of authority on Shaiva philosophy, lived in the tenth century. The most prolific, profound and versatile writer on the Trika is Abhinavagupta who was born between 950 and 960 A.D. His monumental production, *Tantraloka*, is recognised as the encyclopaedia of monastic idealism. He wrote no fewer than fifty volumes on different aspects of the Shaiva philosophy and Sanskrit literature out of which forty-four are extant; the more known among these are; *Tantra Loka*, *Tantra Sara*, *Parmartha Sara and Rasadhvani*. He was the propounder of the "Abasavada" and introduced the Krama and Kula systems in Shaivism.[20]

Works on literature during this period are numberless.[21] But among the important ones mention may be made of Bhima Bhatta's *Ravan Arjuniya* (700 A.D.) Damodara Gupta's *Kuttni Mata* (760 A.D.), Kshiraswamy's *Lexicon* (800 A.D.), Ratnakara's *Haravijiya* (850 A.D.), Vallabh Deva's commentaries on Kalidasa's works, Kshemendra's *Desopadesa* (975 A.D.), Somedeva's *Kathasaritsagara* (1000 A.D.) Bhilhana's *Vikramankdevacharita;* Mankha's *Srikanthacharita* and Jayadratha's *Haricharita Chintamani*.

Books have also been written on Poetics such are, for instance, Vaman Bhatta's *Kavyalamkara*, Rudratta's *Sringartilaka*, Ruyyaka's *Alankarsarvasva* and Mammata's *Kavya Prakasha*.

A distinguished intellectual of this period was Kshemendra (990-1065) whose thirty-four works are extant. Among them are *Desopadesa*, *Narmamala* and *Darpadalna*. He rendered into Sanskrit the famous work *Brahad Katha* of Gunadhya which was

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20 For further information read the monumenlal work *Abhinavagupta* by Dr. K. C. Pandey : Chowkhamba, Varanasi.

21 For detailed information on ancient literature of Kashmir consult Prem Nath Bazaz : *A History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*, chapter two, entitled "cultural achievements of ancients". pp. 20 to 39.

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written in Pishacha dialect. Another stalwart was Bilhana (born in 1078). He travelled widely, achieved fame as poet and scholar, and became the tutor of a princess at Kalyani in Deccan. Among his works that have survived are *Vikramankadevacharita*, *Karna Sundari Mala* and *Chaurapanchashika*.

We have already dwelt on the achievements of the Kashmiris in the domain of architecture during ancient times. Kalhana has recorded in great detail the construction of temples, mathas, viharas, chaityas and other religious and public edifices built by Hindu or Buddhist monarchs and nobles. Most of these constructions were in existence during the life ime of the Poet-Historian in twelfth century The sun-god's temple at Martand so highly spoken of by Sir Francis Younghusband was only one of these.

### *Women in Ancient Society*

In building the social and cultural life, women played an effective and a splendid role. It would be no exaggeration to say that their status in Kashmir was much better than in the rest of India. Broadly speaking, from early times to the thirteenth century they enjoyed remarkable freedom, wielded ample power and exercised responsibility which gave them a high position in the society. Members of both the sexes equally shared joys and sorrows of life. "Kashmir women had emerged from the domestic into the political stage," observed R.S. Pandit "were free, owned landed and other immovable property, managed their own estates and even fought on the battle field as generals and commanders at the head of troops."[22]

At times Kashmiri women have risen to pinnacles of glory and distinguished themselves as rulers (Yashomati, Sugandha, Didda and Kota,) in their own right, as regents of minor princes, as powerful queens-consort (Ishandevi, Vakpushta, Ananglekha, Srilekha, Suryamati and Jayamati,) as diplomats in peace and war (Radda Devi, Kalhanika,) as commanders of armies (Silla, Chudda,) as thrifty landladies, as builders and reformers and as preceptors of the religious lore. As well in

[22] R. S. Pandit, *River of Kings*, (translation of Rajtarangni), The Indian Press, Allahabad, P. XXXIII

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singing and dancing, they have earned fame in keeping homes. There were few walks of life in which they did not achieve prominence and there was no social activity in which they did not participate side by side with their menfolk.

There was a tradition as forceful as law that at the time of coronation when the king was crowned the queen had to be present and actively participate in the ceremony. She shared the throne in the royal durbar on the auspicious occasion and was sprinkled with the sacred waters of the *abhisheka* (coronation) in the same manner as the king by the *raj guru* (royal preceptor). The queen had her separate funds, own treasurers and councillors to help and advise her on affairs of state. Like the king she used to hold open levees and receive the homage of the feudatory chiefs, prominent nobles and big officers of the state.[23]

*Impact of Islam*

In the fourteenth century Islam, like Buddhism in earlier times, revolutionised the social life of the people.

The stiff and strong opposition to Islam by the orthodox Brahmins on the one hand and its critical appreciation by the Shaiva philosophers on the other, finally resulted in the emergence of a new composite culture which may be called religious humanism. The first apostle of this creed was hermitess Lalla or Lal Ded who laid the basic principles of the culture in her sayings, *Lalla Vakyani.* Her illustrious disciple was Sheikh Nooruddin or Nund Reshi who is the national saint of the Kashmiris. Sheikh Nooruddin had a large number of followers, and, after his death, his chief disciples founded the order of "Rishis" in the Valley. The peaceful and rapid conversion of large masses to Islam was facilitated by the spread of the cult of religious humanism.

Islam as practised in the Valley, though it surely stands on the basis of the cardinal principles taught by the Quran, has been deeply influenced by the ancient Kashmir culture.

23 For a detailed information on past of Kashmiri women see Prem Nath Bazaz, *Daughters of the Vitasta*, (1959), Pamposh Publications, New Delhi

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Even after their conversion to the new faith, the Kashmiris did not altogether abandon the ways of life and mental outlook that their fore fathers had cultivated through thousands of years of their history. A Kashmiri Muslim shares in common with his Hindu compatriot many inhibitions, superstitions, idolatrous practices as well as social liberties and intellectual freedoms which are unknown to Islam. "I attribute much of the delightful tolerance which exists between the followers of the two religions chiefly to the fact that the Kashmiri Mussalmans never really gave up the old religion of the country", observed Sir Walter R. Lawrence who knew the Kashmiris more intimately than any other foreigner.[24] The *Imperial Gazetteer* recorded a similar opinion : "Close observers of the country say that the so-called Mussalmans are still Hindus at heart".[25] The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* corroborates this : "The great majority of the inhabitants of Kashmir are professedly Mohammedans but they are still strongly influenced by their ancient superstitions".[26]

This conclusion is borne out by the compositions of Kashmiri poets who flourished during the medieval period and expressed their thoughts in the idiom of pre-Muslim times. The following piece of Shah Gafoor, a sufi poet, may be quoted as a typical example :

Yut ith zanmas kenh chhuna larun
Dharnai darun Soham su
Bashar travith gachhi Isshar garun
Isharus saiti roz sapdak
Ishiŕ sapdith gachhi yi sharir marun
Dharnai darun soham su
Dah chhi avtar zah lagina tharun
Meh zan prazlan naran chum
Ram ram karun gau nam sandarun
Dharnai darun ... Soham su

*"Birth avails us nothing. Meditate, therefore, upon Soham the Eternal. Forgetting the age seek Ishvara. Keep close to Ishvara to realise Him.*
*"Once you attain Ishvara this mortal be got rid of. Meditate upon the Eternal. There are ten incarnations of God. One should never be nervous. Narayana dazzles like the moon. Repetition of the name of Rama leads to one's salvation. Meditate upon the Eternal."*

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24 *The Valley of Kashmir* p. 286

25 Quoted by Sisir Gupta in *Kashmir*, Asia Publishing House, p. 26

26 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. XIII (1947), p. 290.

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Shah Gafoor was a devout Muslim of the ninteenth century and by no means a unique personality. Almost all popular Muslim poets of the Valley have sung in the same strain. By being converted to the new faith they did not renounce the old cultural traditions and modes of thought.

Of course Islam in its turn has also not left Hinduism and its followers unaffected in the Valley.

Lawrence wrote that Kashmir Brahmins did things that would horrify the orthodox Hindus. "They will drink water brought by a Mussalman ; they will eat food cooked on a Mussalman boat; the foster-brother often obtains great power in a Hindu household. Maharaja Gulab Singh did his utmost to stop the practice of drinking water brought by a Mussalman, and severely interdicted the eating of cheese (prepared by Mussalmans). But it was all to no effect."[27] This might appear trivial in changed circumstances obtaining today but it is right to remember that eighty years ago Hindus were rigidly orthodox and untouchability at its worst.

Summing up his findings on the social and cultural closeness of the Pandits and Muslims in the Valley, Lawrence observed :

> If a comparison be made between the customs of the Hindus and the Musalmans, it will be seen that there are many points of resemblance, and the curious prominence of walnut and salt, and the use of the '*mendhi*' dye, will be noticed. Besides, the '*mehnzrat*', or use of the *mendhi* dye, in both religions there is the *laganchir* or fixing of the marriage day; 'phirsal', the visit paid by the bridegroom to the bride's house after marriage; '*gulimiut*', the giving of money and jewels; the dress and the title of the bridegroom as '*Maharaja*' and of the bride as '*Maharani*' : '*chudus*', the giving of presents, on the fourth day after death, and the '*wehrawod*' and '*wehrawar*' the celebration respectively of the birthday and day of death.

Religious Humanism has been the precious heritage of all classes and communities in the Valley whether formally they adhere to Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism or any other religion. Any activities which cut at the root of this philosophy and culture have appeared abhorrent and unendurable to them.

Staunch believer in and the standard bearer of Religious Humanism, King Zain-ul-abdin Bud Shah gave the people the most peaceful and prosperous fifty-two years (1420-1472 A.D.)

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[27] *The Valley of Kashmiri* P. 300

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in the medieval times which are known as the golden age of Kashmir.

*Progress Under Muslim Rule*

During the Muslim period the cultural progress was more or less maintained by the Kashmiris. Apart from the fusion of the two thought currents, the people made new contributions to arts, architecture and literature. Some valuable books continued to be written in Sanskrit. With the stabilisation of Muslim rule, Perisan became the court language. The Kashmiris learnt it with zest and produced informed treatises on various subjects in it. Indeed, they became so proficient in the language that Kashmir was given the title of "Iran-i-Saghir" (Younger Iran) by the learned.

Among the important Sanskrit works of this period mention may be made of Jagdhar Bhatt's *Stutikusumanjali* (1350), Sri Kantha's *Balbodhini* (1475), Vallabh Deva's *Padyavali* (1550) and Shivopadhyay's *Vignana Bhairavi* (1759).

Sultan Zain-ul-abdin got many books translated from Sanskrit and Arabic into Persian and Kashmiri for the benefit of the people. He built a library consisting of 25 thousand volumes, a surprising achievement in those days. It is said that a copy of *Atharva Veda* was found in this collection when it had become extinct in the rest of India.

Books written in Persian and available even today are over three hundred in number.[28] Among their authors are Yaqub Sarfi, Baba Daud Khaki, Khawaja Habib Ullah Nawshahri, Mirza Akmaluddin Kamil, Mulla Mohammed Mahsin Fani, Khawaja Abdul Karim, Baba Daud Mushkani and Mulla Zihni.

Mirza Kamil produced the prodigious work, *Bahar-ul-Urfan*, which is in four volumes and comprises 80,000 verses ; it was inspired by the philosophical thoughts popularised by Maulana Rumi.

The most distinguished thinker of the Muslim period who personified the spirit of Kashmir culture in Persian literature

[28] For details of litarary, cultural and architectural works of this period read Prem Nath Bazaz: *A History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*, Chapter Four entitled "Cultural Resurgence Under the Muslims" Pp. 81-110.

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was Mulla Mohammed Mahsin Fani who wrote a fascinating book, *Dabistan-i-Mazahib.* He was born in 1615 and belonged to a family which enjoyed reputation for learning and scholarship. He was widely travelled in India and the MIddle East, and had come in close contact with known philosophers and religious leaders of his age. Returning to homeland and renouncing the world, Fani produced the *Dabistan* in 1655, critically examining in an unbiased manner the mythologies and philosophies of different religions. He did not hesitate to express his preference and liking in certain respects for some religions other than Islam to which he belonged by birth. He was an admirer of Akbar's Din Illahi and Zoroastrianism. The *Dabistan* is the measure of progressive intellectualism during the Muslim times.

Among those who composed exquisite poetry in Persian were; Ashraf, Tayib, Mazhari, Saifi, Salim, Auji, Faroghi, Najimi, Guya, Taufiq, Sati, Yakta, and Bahauddin Mattu.

A volatile, independent artist who composed finest Persian poetry, was Mulla Mohammed Tahir Ghani. He flourished in the reign of Aurangzeb. His verses elicited highest praise of the Iranian scholars. In fact, Persian poetry found another home in the Valley during his time. It is remarkable that Ghani never composed a *qasida* in praise of any human being. When Aurangzeb impressed by the poet's scholarship and fame, ordered his presence at the royal court Ghani refused to attend and, strangely, died next day.

Kashmir Hindus were equally proficient in Persian literature ; they too composed poetry of a high order. Among such poets were Munshi Bhawani Das Kachru "Nikku", Tabaram Turki, and Rajkaul Arzbeg "Dairi" whose *dewans* appeared in 1840, 1861 and 1887 respectively.

Though it is known that books in Kashmiri were written earlier,[29] Hermitess Lalla whose sayings, *Lalla Vakyani*, in archaic Kashmiri is extant, popularised the use of the language for cultural purposes. Following her, many contributions were

[29] Shati Kanth's *Mahanai Prakash* written in the thirteenth century in Kashimiri was published in 1918 by the Research Department of the Kashmir Government.

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made by several other seers and poets to the literature. Among those worthy of mention are Habba Khatun, Arnimal, Prakash Bhat, Sahib Kaul, Abdullah Baihaqi, Mohamud Gami, Parmanand, Maqbul Shah Kralawari, Rasul Mir, Wahab Parey, Ramzan Bhat, Laxman Ju and Krishan Das.

Under the Muslim rule architecture took a new shape a novel wooden style was invented which soon became quite popular ; it fulfilled a religious need ; the temple was meant for the deity and the individual but the mosque was needed for the communal worship ; it was to be spacious. Buildings of stone are cold but those of wood are warm and comfortable inside and therefore more fit for congregational prayers.

The best specimens of the wooden style of architecture were the royal palaces that Bud Shah built. Zain Dab which he constructed at Nav Shahar (now a part of Srinagar) was twelve storeys high, each of which contained fifty halls (to accommodate 500 people each), besides smaller rooms and corridors. But the wooden structures do not last long. The two grand buildings of this period which have survived are Khanqahi Moulla and Jama Masjid ; both were frequently damaged by fire. They have of course been renovated from time to time and may be considered as the fine samples of the architectural achievements of the Muslim period.

The Mughals introduced their own style of architecture in the Valley but it was neither the creation of the Kashmiris nor the work of the local artisans ; designers, craftsmen and engineers were usually imported from outside to raise the structures and lay out the gardens.

In the days of the Sultans music and dancing made good progress. We read of the hundreds of musicians and dancers who were attached to the court and were accomplished in their respective arts.[30] In the Indian section of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, there are twenty four large canvas paintings which were produced in Kashmir centuries ago.[31]

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[30] *Kings of Kashmira*, Vol. 111, Pp. 133-136

[31] *Kashir*, Vol. II, pp. 555-557

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## CHAPTER TWO

# FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

Whatever their achievements in other fields, the Kashmiris could not pay much attention to evolve political theories or set up political institutions as did the Greeks by establishing democratic governments in city states of Athens. Among the prodigious literary productions of the Kashmiris, there is no work like Plato's *Republic*. But the Kashmiris did make attempts, though feeble, to have some sort of an organised system of government.

In the time of King Jalauka who ruled the country in third century B.C., the Kashmiris seem to have been successful in laying the foundations of a constitutional government by introducing a system of council of ministers thus restricting the powers of monarchy. It was under the recognised authority of this constitution that many monarchs who proved unfit to rule were deposed, even banished, and replaced by candidates with merit to preside over the destinies of the people. Occasionally, at a time of national emergency, kings have been elected and this practice was followed down to the thirteenth century A.D. Even during peaceful times it was the council of ministers, and, if need be, in collaboration with a bigger assembly of

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intellectuals, which decided the succession to kingship in a disputed case. In 939 A.D. commander-in-chief Kamla Vardhan was in a position to seize the throne by armed might. He hesitated to do so and was anxious to win the public opinion to his side. But the verdict of the joint council of ministers and intellectuals went against him and another aspirant to the throne, Yashaskara, a Brahmin, was elected king. "To the historian the interest lies, firstly in the fact that in spite of the corruption and violence of the times, an appeal was made to the traditional law of kingnship instead of to the force of arms", observed E. B. Havell, "and, secondly, in the unexpected result of the Assembly's vote which was that Kamla Vardhan's claim was set aside in favour of the Brahmin candidate, Yashaskara, who was duly consecrated as king by the ancient Vedic rite of Abhisheka and reigned for 47 years afterwards".[1]

But such democratic practices, however rudimentary, were more honoured in breach than in observance after the sixth century, if not earlier. "Usually, except in the intervals when a strong man captured the power, there was a state of perpetual intrigue and assassination, of struggles with brothers, cousins, uncles before a chief even came to the throne ; of fight for power with ministers, with the military, with the "nobles" when he was on it, of constant fear of poisoning and assassination, of wearying, petty internecine wars, and of general discomfort, uncertainty and unrest." [2] Consequently people had to wage a long drawn struggle for good government and liberty. "Kashmir is a land that delights in insurrections", concluded Kalhana seeing that anarchy was prevalent in the Valley during his own times. He added : "In this country dancing women of the temples of the gods take a pleasure in upheavals against the king."[3]

But the struggle must have proved unavailing and fruitless, and broken the back of fighters for freedom, indeed of the

[1] E. B. Havell : *History of Aryan Rule in India* (1918), Harrap, London. p. 275.

[2] Sir Francis Younghusband : *Kashmir*, p. 155.

[3] *Rajatarangni*, VII 491.

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people in general. For we find that at the fall of Shahmiri dynasty the Kashmiris had lost self-confidence and the sense of national pride ; the main act of patriotism if at all it may be called by that name, was to invite foreign rulers to invade Kashmir and occupy it. Babur, Humayun, Sher Shah Sur, Akbar, Ahmad Shah Abdali and Ranjit Singh, one after the other, received deputations of Kashmiri leaders urging that, because the Valley was in turmoil and people groaning under unbearable administration the foreign ruler could easily occupy it with the assistance of the deputationists and their supporters. The hands of Babur, Humayun and Sher Shah Sur were full in quelling disturbances in India and consolidating the power that they had newly captured. For the first time it was in Akbar's days (1586 A. D.) that the Valley came under foreign domination. The Kashmiris no doubt got some respite under the Emperor ; but not for long and at a very heavy cost.

### *Disarmed and Dispossessed*

In order to break the marshal spirit of the conquered people and to subdue them for ever, the Mughals forbade recruitment of the Kashmiris in the armed forces. This notwithstanding the fact, as stated by Abul Fazal in *Ain Akbari*, that the Valley furnished 6,420 cavalry and 50,530 infantry to the Imperial Mughal Army.[4] The nefarious practice of disarming Kashmiris was followed by the Pathans as well as the Sikhs and the Dogras. It brought about the expected results ; the subjugated people forgot the glorious traditions of living like self-respecting human beings, of heroically defending their homeland and of standing against injustice.

By another ukase the Mughals arbitrarily deprived the Kashmiris of the ownership of their land ; the emperor was declared as sole proprietor of all cultivable land in the Valley and the Kashmiri landlords were entered in the revenue registers as tenants. This practice too was continued by the succesive rulers till the days of Maharaja Hari Singh when in 1932 he was compelled through a mass uprising to restore the ownership to the people.

[4] Quoted in *The Valley of Kashmir*, p. 188.

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*Down and Out*

By the time the Dogras got the possession of the Valley the Kashmiris were down and out. Creative work in the fields of philosophy, the arts and architecture had come to a stop. The people looked haggard in look and emaciated in body; they had become indolent and lost all zest for life. Almost continuous oppression and suppression for many centuries had affected every part of their existence. The natural environments continued to inspire them but the suffocating atmosphere disallowed them to rise to full stature. Long periods of tyranny produced the inevitable consequences. "They became absolutely hopeless and sullen, and each man played for his own hand," wrote Lawrence. "This sullen temper is one of the worst points in the Kashmiri character and joind to deeprooted apathy, makes it very difficult to improve the condition of the people."[5] Any one who came from outside and had a dealing with a Kashmiri spoke no word of appreciation for him. K. F. Knight called him a "bearded disgrace to human race who would howl, weep and throw himself down merely when a dog ran up to him and barked."[6]

Colonel Torrens in his book on travels describing the character of Kashmiris in terms by no means complimentary referred to a Persian couplet which was often quoted over a hundred years ago, by their detractors:

Agar Kuht-ul-rijal uftad, azeshan uns kam geeri
Eke Afghan, doum Kumboh, seum badzatKashmiri"

Which may be rendered thus:

*"Should fate decree a dearth of men*
*Then, friend of mine, beware ye*
*Of Afghan, Kumbo, scoundrel too,*
*But worst of all. do thou eschew*
*That ill-bred knave Kashmiri:"*[7]

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[5] *The Valley of Kashmir*, p. 278

[6] E.F. Knight, *Where Three Empires meet*, (1895) Longmans; London p. 111

[7] Op. cit p. 299

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Frederic Drew who served as an official under Maharaja Ranbir Singh for a decade, said that "the Kashmiris were false tongued, ready with a lie and given to various forms of deciet,"[8]

William Moorcroft who studied Kashmir affairs in 1819 to 1824 with a considerable degree of sympathy and interest called the Kashmiris "selfish, superstitious, ignorant, supple, intriguing, dishonest and false...whose transactions are always conducted in fraudulent spirit, equalled only by the effrontery with which he faces detection."[9] After making these disparaging remarks, Moorcroft admits that "the vices of the Kashmiri, I cannot help considering, however, as the effects of the political conditions rather than his nature, and conceive that it would not be difficult to transform him into a very different being."[40]

Victor Jacquemont made similar observations in 1833. He said : "The Afghans having during the last century despoiled the Mughals of their conquest, and the Sikhs having expelled the Afghans in this century, a general pillage has ensued upon each conquest and in the intervals of peace, anarchy and oppression have done their utmost against labour and industry, so that the country is now completely ruined, and poor Kashmiris appear to have thrown the handle after the hatchet, and to have become the most indolent of mankind."[11] "In a land on which terror has once lain like a poisonous mist, truth does not grow easily", commented Sir W. H. Beveridge.

*Impartial Assesment*

An impartial assessment of the Kashmiri character by the close of the last century was, however, made by Sir Walter Lawrence from whose balanced report we have already quoted. He said :

"When one reflects on what they now are one cannot help the thought that many races, had they lived through generations of oppression like the Kashmirs, might have been more cunning and more dishonest. In a country where there was practically no justice the only weapon in the

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8 Frederic Drew : *Northern Barrier of India* (1877), Stanford, London. p. 211

9 William Moorcraft : *Travels*, Vol II 299.

10 Ibid p. 299.

11 Victor Jacquemont, *Letters From India*, (1834), Vol II, Edward Churton, London, p. 230

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hands of the weak was lying and subterfuge, and I must admit at once that the Kashmirs,in their dealings with officials, do not strictly adhere to the truth,"[12]

Elaborating his Views, Lawrence recorded :

I think many of the hard things said about the Kashmiris are due to the fact that the official interpreters of their character have been foreigners often grasping and corrupt, always unsympathetic. Mughal Subahs, Pathan Sirdars, Sikh and Dogra governors dismissed all difficulties of administration and all humane suggestions emanating from their masters with the remark that Kashmiris were dishonest, treacherous and *zulum parast*. It is the old tale of giving a dog a bad name, and I must confess that during my first year's work in the Valley I shared these views. But I soon grew to understand that the Kashmiris like other orientals, has two sides to his character as distinct as light and darkness......the dark side of the Kashmiri is revealed when he is in the presence of officials. He has had good reason to hate and distrust them, and his only weapon against them is deceit. His light side is seen when he is in his field or with his family in the house. Take as an instance the relations of a Kashmiri cultivator with the village shopkeepers. The shopkeeper (*wani*) is a musalman and must not take interest. He lends money to the peasants on a system known as *wad*......No *hund* (*hujat*) is signed by the borrower and the only record of the transaction is an entry in the daily ledger of the *wani*. I have always made a point of talking with the *wanis* whenever I see a village shop, and they are unanimous in saying that they never made a bad debt and that they are never obliged to sue a debtor. This state of things does not argue that the Kashmiri peasants are dsihonest.[13]

Lawrence added :

"Crime is almost non-existent in Kashmir. Crimes of dishonesty may be said to be absolutely non existent among the peasants. Property is entirely safe and during the six years which I have spent in the villages, I have never heard of crimes of theft, or burglary being committed by agriculturists, This surely points to the fact that the Kashmiris are not the dishonest people they are represented to be" [14]

At another place in his book on travels, Moorcroft made similar observations :

The natives of Kashmir have been always considered as among the most lively and ingenious people of Asia, and deservedly so. With a liberal and wise government they might assume an equally high scale as a moral and intelleetual people.[15]

Vigne corroborated the view by cryptically remarking : "Kashmir will become the focus of Asiatic civilization, a miniature England in the heart of Asia."

In the, then, prevalent social degeneration and political tyranny, women too yielded the high status they had enjoyed for

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[12] Op. cit. p. 274

[13] Op. cit. p. 286

[14] Op, cit. 300

[15] Op. cit. Vol. II p. 128.

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centuries; all freedoms earned by them were curbed and they were reduced to the position of slaves. At the close of the last century they had sunk to the low level of destitution and ignorance ; they had lost charms of body and refinements of mind; they lacked self confidence, spirit of revolt and even a sense of righteous indignation which made them remarkable in olden times.

*Communal Harmony*

Whatever the defence, there can be little doubt that at the advent of the present century, the people of the Valley had ceased to possess many virtues and creative faculties which made them great in early times.

In one respect, however, they held their own; they refused to be divided on the basis of religion when the rulers resorted to machiavellian methods and tried to sow the seeds of Hindu-Muslim or Sunni-Shia feuds. In Sultan Sikander's time (1405-1413 A. D.), at the risk of incurring the king's displeasure, the Muslims gave refuge to innumerable Hindus who had come under suspicion. Ghazi Shah Chak persecuted Khwaja Tahir Rafiq, desciple of Saint Hamza Makhdum and a religious leader of the Sunnis. He had to go into hiding and was given shelter by a Brahmin of Vernag, Aider Suh. When Birbal Dhar, a Pandit jagirdar, stealthily left the Valley in 1819 to invite Ranjit Singh for overthrowing the Muslim Pathan rule, his flight in mid-winter across the snow-covered mountains was made possible with the support voluntarily offered by Maliks Kamdar and Namdar, two Muslim landlords, as well as by large numbers of Muslim peasants in Kulgam Tehsil. In Srinagar, Azim Khan, Pathan Governor, issued orders that Kudmal, wife of Birbal, together with her young, handsome daughter-in-law be produced in the court. Even before the Pathan sepoys appeared at Birbal's house, Muslim patriots had planned to thwart the evil designs of the tyrant. Qudus Gojwari, a Muslim grandee, had given the two ladies protection under his roof with obvious risk to his own life. Furious Azim ordered search of all possible hiding places but the Muslims refused to divulge the secret; it was a unique act of chivalry in that dismal period but, nevertheless, a trait

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of Kashmiri character the importance of which cannot be minimised or overlooked. Again, enraged by the activities of the Muslim rebels who made Khanqah-i-Moulla as their rendezvous, the Sikhs decided to demolish the sacred shrine in 1834 but the Pandit nobles opposed the move and the Sikh Governor's evil designs were foiled. Examples can be multiplied but these few are sufficient to depict a bright side of otherwise a dark picture.

Thus the Kashmiri was not a degraded soul beyond redemption. Walter Lawrence summarising his considered views remarked:

> Though the character of Kashmiris leaves much to be desired, I think that it is to their credit that it is not worse, considering the few chances they have had for becoming truthful, manly and self respecting. The Kashmiri is what his rulers have made him, but I believe and hope that two generations of a just and strong rule will transform him into a useful, intelligent and fairly honest man,

Lawrence added :

> The Kashmiris possess an individuality and national character which will cling to them wherever they go....The Kashmiris are fond of their own country, its food, its water and its dress, and though opperession has driven them out of the valley many have come back and all are loth to leave.[17]

### *A New Era Begins*

With the acquisition of the Valley by the Dogras in 1846, the Kashmir people entered a new era of their history. The Dogra Rajputs were no doubt autocrats who vainly treated the Valley as a conquered territory, its people deserving no mercy and no higher status than those of serfs. In his *Travels*, Vigne narrates that an insurrection took place against the authority of Gulab Singh who went in person to suppress it. "Some of the prisoners were flayed alive under his own eyes...He then ordered one or two of the skins to be stuffed with straw...The figures were then planted on the wayside so that passerby might see it; and Gulab Singh called his son's attention to it and told him to take a lesson in the art of governing."[18] "This last state was worse then the first", wrote lieutenant colonel Torrens, "for Gulab Singh went beyond his predecesors in the gentle acts of

17 Ibid p. 282

18 G.T. Vigne : *Travels in Kashmir Ladakh, Iskardoo* (1842), Vol. 1, p. 241, Colburn, London.

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undue taxation and extortion."[19] K.M. Panikar who served as an official under the Dogras concluded that "Gulab Singh did not achieve his ends by methods which were always beyond criticism. He did not hesitate to resort to tricks and strategems which would, in ordinary life, be considered dishonourable."[20] Conditions were no better under his son Ranbir Singh. According to Sir Francis Younghusband : "In the early sixties cultivation was decreasing, the people were wretchedly poor, there were few men of respectable, none of wealthy appearance" and "there were almost prohibitive duties levied on all merchandise imported or exported."[21] When the calamity of the Great Famine fell upon the people in 1877-79 the administration proved incapable to protect them; thousands died of starvation and dead bodies could be seen by heaps lying on the roadside; whole villages lay in ruins and the city of Srinagar was half destroyed.

The Dogras continued the ban on cow slaughter first imposed by the Sikhs; the accused spared from hanging were imprisoned for life. Some special taxes were levied on the Muslims, among them a tax on *shariat* marriages. Many mosques in Srinagar and big towns were forcibly seized and impiously used to store grains offending the religious susceptibility of the Muslims.

But now a new factor was gradually destroyring the old values and changing the political outlook of the people. By the Treaty of Amritsar between the British and Maharaja Gulab Singh, Kashmir had become a part af the Indian sub-continent which had been unified and over which the British ruled as the imperialist power. The Dogras were no sovereign despots but were subject to the supervision of the British overlords. As in the rest of India, the Valley was having an impact of the western education and culture; the Kashmiris were learning the preliminary lessons in democratic practices.

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19 Lt. Col. Torrens : *Travels in Ladakh, Tartary and Kashmir* (1863), Saunders, London. p. 301

20 K.M. Panikar : *Jamumu and Kashmir Territories* (1830), Hopkins London P. 152.

21 Op. cit. p. 176.

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Early in the eighties of the last century, some Christian missionaries extended their sphere of work in the field of education from the Punjab to Kashmir. A school was started in Srinagar by them where English began to be taught as a subject. The Dogra government could not help opening its own schools soon and before the century ended many primary and high schools were established where Kashmiri students were educated on modern lines. In 1905, Theosophical Society started the Hindu College (now known as S.P. College) where university education was imparted to young scholars.

Pax Britannica had already brought tranquillity and introduced the rule of law in the State. The spread of western ideas and notions of democratic society reawakened the long suppressed desire for liberty and aspirations for self-rule.

In the beginning ; Kashmiris did not make any revolutionary demands ; they did not plan to overthrow the Dogra government. They either submitted their humble desires to the Maharaja or, failing to get any redressal, represented their grievances to the British Viceroy. Partly due to backwardness of the people but mainly because of the distrust of the Kashmiris, the Dogra rulers manned the administrative services with outsiders, mostly the Punjabis. The State army was exclusively reserved for the Dogras and the Kashmiris were not allowed to be recruited in it.

Realising that through education alone they could equip themselves with merit to hold responsible and high posts in the administration, the Kashmiris asked for more schools and colleges. But this reasonable demand was half heartedly conceded, and never fully met.

### *Inspiration from Congress*

By the turn of the century the Indian National Congress was asserting itself on the all-India scene as a reckonable political force. After the First World War, under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership it became a mass party which revolutionised the outlook of the Indians. The gigantic Non-Cooperation Movement of 1919-22 stirred the desire for establishment of Swaraj which gripped the imagination of the Indians. This

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could not but influence the thinking of the State people. The claims of the Kashmiris became insistent. To the demand for more schools and colleges were added new ones for proprietorship of land and adequate share in administration. Getting no justice from the Maharaja, a few dignitaries and religious leaders prominent among whom were Nur Shah Naqishbandi, Mirwaiz Jama Masjid and Saaduddin Shawl, submitted a memorial to Lord Reading, British Viceroy, in 1924, adumbrating their grievances. For doing so they were punished, their jagirs confiscated and one of them, Saaduddin Shawl, banished.

In late twenties, Kashmiri Pandits stole a march over the Muslims; they launched a movement which is known as "Kashmir for Kashmiris". Under the leadership of Shankerlal Koul "Kashmiricus" for the first time in modern period, the Kashmiris started a publicity campaign demanding recruitment of educated sons of the soil in government services, ban on the sale of land to outsiders, freedom of the press, freedom of association and assembly, and creation of an elected legislature to voice the views of the people on all affairs of state. It was as a result of this campaign that the Maharaja was induced to enact the State Subject law imposing restrictions on the entry of non-Kashmiris in government services and on sale of agricultural land to them. But this measure of reform failed to adequately meet with the people's demand.

Things were now moving very fast in the Indian subcontinent. In December 1929, the Indian National Congress adopted on the banks of Ravi at Lahore, the resolution of complete independence as its goal; a mass civil disobedience movement followed which electrified the subcontinent from Gilgit to Cape Comorin. Kashmir too felt its repercussions ; people began to be deeply excited with what was taking place in the rest of the country.

It seems astounding today but is nevertheless a fact that the Dogras ostritch-like refused to see the writing on the wall or be moved by these soul-stirring developments. And when a number of Muslim youngmen—among them Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah—educated at different universities in India and deeply moved by the Congress struggle for freedom, returned

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home a spark was applied to the explosive matter which had accumulated in the Valley.

*Elemental Upsurge*

Then in July 1931 the Kashmiris rose in rebellion and turned the corner. It was an unprecedented, elemental upheaval, almost a revolution which shook the State and brought the Dogra Raj to a realisation of the stark reality.

Unfortunately due to certain causes which are too numerous to be discussed here, the movement for freedom remained confined to the Muslim community. It was conducted on religious lines and solely by the Muslims though among the Hindus there were many sympathisers for the cause. However, from the declarations, pronouncements, speeches and resolutions of the leaders of the movement it was clear that the basic principles guiding them were identical with those adopted by democratic movements in all other countries, particularly India. Soon the struggle was conducted under the banner of an organised party called the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference. The main demands of the Conference were an adequate share for the Muslims in administration, freedom of the press, freedom of association and establishment of a legislature with an elected majority. The Muslims also demanded that all invidious distinctions against them should be abolished.

The 1931 rebellion was a grand success as most of the demands had to be conceded by the Dogra ruler. The proprietorship of the land, lost in Mughal days, was restored ; the confiscated mosques were handed back to the Muslims ; freedom of expression and association with certain limitations was granted and a legislative assembly established though the majority of its members was nominated by the Maharaja ; more opportunities were afforded to the Muslims to enter State services.

Even greater than these political gains were the improvements in the character of the Kashmiris as an outcome of the successful insurrection. Now they no longer looked down upon themselves as born bondmen ; they began to walk erect

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with their heads raised and refused to be easily bullied by an official or an outsider. A new life unknown during past centuries, began to pulsate and gradually the Kashmiri was seen coming into his own.

In the course of the sporadic uprisings throughout the latter half of 1931 the Dogra army was busily employed in quelling the disturbances. The Kashmiris bared their breasts to the bayonets and guns of the army men. It was reported that not a single bullet had been found in the back of scores of dead bodies examined and post-mortemed; none had tried to run away when firing was resorted to by the Dogra military to disperse the patriotic demonstrators.

### *Cultural Renaissance*

In the field of art and culture too a renissance movemens came into existence which made slow but steady advance. Two illustrious poets in Kashmiri language who interpreted the catholicity of Kashmir culture and reflected the urges, desires and aspirations of their fellow countrymen in beautiful verse, were Ghulam Ahmed Mahjur and Abdul Ahad Dar Azad. Mahjur was a votary of Hindu-Muslim unity and an ardent admirer of religious humanism. He discouraged communal distinctions and advocated the cause of nationalism in his sweet poetry. Mahjur repeatedly laid emphasis on human harmony and love. To him this is one of the cardinal principles of Kashmir culture. Azad, a teacher by profession, was a non-conformist intellectual who, though a passionate lover of Kashmir, denounced alike communalism and nationalism. He was a modern secularist, a rebel and a standard bearer of mental and social revolution. He reposed faith in scientific humanism and was critical of religious approach to life. His *Shikwai Iblis* is a challenge to believers and a frank denial of the supernatural. Azad's *History of Kashmiri Literature* in three volumes is a classic. While both, Mahjur and Azad, expressed unbounded faith in the composite culture of Kashmir and laid stress on the importance of secular view of politics, the latter went much further by preaching a materialistic philosophy of life.

Other notable poets who composed in Kashmiri were :

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Zind Koul, G.H. Beg Arif, Hairat Pandani, Dilsoz, Shams Faqir, Asi, Samad Mir, Ahad Zargar, Rahman Dar, Pitambar Fani, and Ahmad Batwari.

Under the Dogras, Urdu became the official language and medium of instruction in schools. Some Kashmiris achieved eminence in writing short stories and novels and in composing poetry in this language. Among them mention may be made of poets Nand Lal Talib, Dina Nath Mast, and of the story writer, Prem Nath Pardesi.

Anand Koul Bamzai was among the first batch of Kashmiris to profit by western education and thought. He served as the President of the Srinagar Municipality for many years with distinction. He wrote in English; two of his productions are *A History of Kashmir* (1913) and *The Kashmiri Pandit* (*1924*). Ram Chandra Kak, an archaeologist by training who rose by dint of hard labour to the eminent position of the Prime Minister (1945-47) under Maharaja Hari Singh's rule wrote a notable volume on *Ancient Monuments of Kashmir* (*1933*). Professer Jaya Lal Koul compiled and translated into English a selection of the Kashmir poetry, *Kashmir Lyrics*. Mention may also be made of Sansar Chand Koul's two works *Birds of Kashmir* (*1939*) and *Beautiful Valley of Kashmir* (*1942*); Arjan Nath Supru's *The Building of Jammu and Kashmir State* (*1931*) and Gwash Lal Koul's *Kashmir through Ages*, which are all informative.

In 1932 freedom of Press was achieved by the people and periodicals began to appear ventilating public opinion and voicing the feelings of different sections and classes. The journals mostly indulged in petty quarrels reflecting the vicious climate generated by the communal disturbances after the 1931 upheaval. But a few struggled to rise above the pettiness and have a broader view of national interests. The most notable of these was *Hamdard* started jointly in 1935 by Sheikh Abdullah and Prem Nath Bazaz to revive the tolerant spirit characteristic of Kashmir culture and to espouse the cause of secularism and social democracy in the State.

Among the prominent journalists who were at one time or another on the editorial staff of the *Hamdard* and adopted

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liberal outlook in State politics were Mohammad Syed Masoodi, Nand Lal Wattal and Jagan Nath Sathu. Wattal is now the chief editor of *Khidmat*, official organ of the State National Congress. Sathu represents London *Telegraph* and New Delhi *Thought*. Another notable journalist who made a mark in the forties by his balanced assessment of events and developments is R. K. Kak working on the staff of the *Statesman*.

The freedom in thinking and the comparative peace which the British suzerainty over Dogra autocracy established in the State brought about the revival of the innate artistic talents of the people ; 1931 upsurge gave an impetus to it. The Kashmiri artisans began to produce things of beauty in embroidery, paper machie, wood carving, silver ware, shawl weaving and several other creative fields; though it must be admitted that in architecture, sculpture and designing they have not yet been able to reach anywhere near the high standards set by their forbears in past ages.[22]

### *Secularisation of Politics*

Whatever the reasons for its adoption—and I hold that some of these were justifiable—the communal approach of the essentially political struggle for freedom waged in 1931, was inconsistent with the cultural traditions of the Valley. Unsurprisingly, this was being realized by the sponsors of the movement even as early as February-March 1931 while the masses held aloof and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah had not achieved the pre-eminent position of the top leader which he did in months to follow. An impartial study of the speeches delivered by the then luminaries of Kashmir Muslim politics such as Maulvi Mohammed Abdulah, Ghulam Nabi Gilkar and Saaduddin Shawl will bear ample witness that they were not happy over the happenings misdirecting public affairs into communal channels. Circumstances were impelling the leaders to adopt this stance; nevertheless they felt uncomfortable and out of their element.

[22] For fuller information about the cultural activities of the Kashmiris under the Dogra rule read Prem Nath Bazaz : *History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*, Chapter Six entitled "The Cultural Renaissance"

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The Muslim Conference was founded in October 1932. One need only patiently go through the records of the deliberations of this organisation to conclude that a number of the leaders and workers of the party disliked communalism and disapproved of the religious basis of State politics. Repeatedly were the non-Muslims invited to participate in the struggle for freedom and assured an honourable place in the political life. In the presidential address of the first session of the Muslim Conference we find a remarkable declaration :

> The Kashmir movement is not communal but has come into existence to get the grievances of all classes of people redressed. We assure our Hindu and Sikh brothers that we are prepared to help them in the same manner as we do the Musalmans. *Our country cannot progress until we learn to live amicably with one another.* (*emphasis mine*)

In March 1933, the working committee of the Muslim Conference constituted a sub-committee to "find out ways and means of bridging the gulf between the communities and uniting Hindus and Muslims."

What made the Muslim politicians uneasy and eager to have non-Muslims among them ? Obviously, the communal politics was coming into conflict with the traditional tolerant temperament of the people. Sheikh Abdullah and some of his farsighted close associates in the Muslim Conference had the intelligence to realize this in time and lend vigorous support to secularisation of politics. Happily, the appeals of the Muslim patriots did not fall on deaf ears; progressive Pandits of the Valley enthusiastically responded to the call and joined the struggle by courting imprisonment in August-September 1938 agitation. Thus the cooperation of enlightened Hindus and Muslims brought the State politics on straight path indicated by the cultural traditions of the people. Secularisation became inevitable and the conversion of Muslim Conference to National Conference easily followed.

In the special session of the Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference in June 1939 where the historic change was registered the cream of the Muslim intelligensia was present. It was attended by such well known figures as Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg, Maulvi Mohammad Syed Masoodi, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, Mian Ahmad Yar, Chaudhri Ghulam

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Abbas, Chaudhri Hamidullah and others. G. M. Sadiq presided. Out of 179 delegates present at the session all but three supported the move. It is notable that the dissidents did not belong to the Valley. It would be quite safe to state that every Kashmiri Muslim leader of any importance in the community with the exception of Mirwaiz Mohammed Yusuf Shah (who was not a member of the Muslim Conference) accorded his willing consent to the wholesome change. Indeed, the decision was hailed in the Valley with warmth. Even Chaudhri Abbas of Jammu the unrepentent devotee at the shrine of religious politics, sensing the intensity of the Kashmiri feelings blessed the move, denouncing communalism as a wornout attire. "It suits us no more. We should discard it and have the new garb of nationalism which will lead us to our goal of freedom", he declared. Thus the struggle for freedom became broadbased embracing all sections of the Kashmiris.

When in 1942 the National Congress raised the slogan of "Quit India" asking the British imperialists to leave the shores of the subcontinent, in Kashmir the National Conference too followed suit by asking the Dogra Maharaja in May 1946 to quit the Valley, bag and baggage, enabling the Kashmiris to shape their own future. Again, Pandits took an equal and an honourable part along with the Muslims in the movement.

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## CHAPTER THREE

# ACCESSION TO INDIA

In the last forties when the Indian struggle for freedom reached a decisive stage, Congress leaders failed to convince the Muslims that they will receive even handed justice under a sovereign national government dominated by the Hindus. The Congress leaders believed that so long as the alien rulers were present, holding power to confer favours, it was not possible to inspire confidence in the Muslim countrymen and, with a sense of realism, they agreed, though reluctantly, to the partition of the country on the basis of religion. The entire subcontinent excepting Jammu and Kashmir State, was thus divided into Hindu majority and Muslim majority areas. In Kashmir the National Conference, premier political organisation of the State, under leadership of Sheikh Abdullah, opposed joining the new Muslim dominion of Pakistan and urged upon the Congress leaders to accept the accession of the State to India subject to the subsequent ratification of the act by a referendum.

Having agreed to the principle of partition, the Indian leaders were hesitant to accept the offer of Kashmir nationalists, but at the same time various reasons including the identity of ideals of the Congress and the National Conference as also political kinship of Nehru and Abdullah, prompted them to take the fateful step ; the instrument of accession was signed

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by Lord Mountbatten on behalf of the Indian Government, by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah for the State people and by Mehr Chand Mahajan, Kashmir Premier, representing Maharaja Hari Singh, the hereditary ruler of the State.

The frenzy and fanaticism which preceded and followed the partition were factors hardly conducive to this alliance. It was an act of extraordinary courage and of faith in the future of Indian democracy. When sixty million Muslims belonging to the majority Muslim areas had expressly voted to part company and live separately as a new nation, it appeared vain to think that barely three million Kashmiris would like to willingly stay behind with India. The polarisation of Hindu and Muslim politics as also the wild communal excitement accentuated by holocausts and bloodshed mocked at the venture. But undaunted the Indian and Kashmir leaders took the plunge determined to face the odds. Constitutionally and legally, the accession of Kashmir to India was unexceptionable. If Qaide Azam Jinnah could accept Junagarh as a constituent part of Pakistan merely because the Nawab ruler of that Hindu majority State in Gujarat approached him with the offer, India saw no reason why she should feel shy or timid to extend her helping hand to Kashmir. There was no covenant to debar her from doing so. But law, written or unwritten, has little value if the people affected by it oppose it and believe that it has been imposed on them against their will. In the conditions then prevalent in the subcontinent only people blinded by prejudice could believe that the majority of the Kashmir Muslims would voluntarily support the accession deed to which signatures had been affixed by the leaders of India and Kashmir.

The circumstances leading to the partition had proved that the ideals for the attainment of which the Congress leaders had been labouring for decades had not fully captured the imagination of the people. Of course, the Hindus and Muslims cherished some aspirations in common. Both wanted to be free from British imperialism and establish a democratic pattern of society in the country. But in certain other respects they profoundly disagreed; some of their emotions and cultural

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traditions were peculiar to them. Besides, the Muslims entertained fears and suspicions that after freedom they would not be treated justly by the majority community.

*Kashmir Muslims and Partition*

Broadly speaking, the Kashmir Muslims are not very different from the rest of their coreligionists in the subcontinent. At the time of partition the Kashmiris shared the same emotions which were roused by tragic happenings and were equally perturbed by the apprehensions as their fellow Muslims outside the State. But as we saw in the preceding chapters they have a historic and cultural background which made the Congress leaders believe that Kashmir would prefer to stay with secular India than go to Islamic Pakistan if with the disappearance of British imperialism, suitable climate could be generated for strengthening the alliance under the changed circumstances. Apart from the tolerant outlook which had been inherited from the great King Zain-ul-abidin popularly known in the Valley as Bud Shah (Great King) and fostered during the centuries of alien rule by both the Muslim saints and Pandit seers, one of the great events of recent history which induced the Congress leaders in this thinking was the conversion in 1939 of Muslim Conference to National Conference and the closer ties which had been forged between the Congress and the National Conference for nearly a decade.

But there were other compelling reasons to resist the temptation. Like the Kashmiris, the Pathans too had displayed secular tendencies and owned the Congress ideology for many years while valiantly fighting against the British. In fact, the Congress leaders had formed party governments in the North Western Frontier Province in the days of provincial autonomy. But on the eve of independence the Pathans voted for the partition and creation of Pakistan. This was a warning that it was not wholly prudent to depend on the previous opinion of the Kashmiris which might also have undergone a swift change.

When, therefore, the Congress leaders accepted the accession offer of Kashmir they were fully aware of the

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tremendous difficulties which they were sure to encounter in integrating the State with India; they realized that constitutional and legal accession would be meaningless if it would not followed by emotional integration of the Kashmiris in the mainstream of Indian social life.

It was recognised that Kashmir had an individuality of her own which, in some respects, differed from the Indian Nation. Though on most of the political, economic and social matters facing the liberated people, the Indians and Kashmiris were in entire agreement, there were a few controversial problems mostly cultural, emotional and sentimental which were viewed differently. It was thought that with the passage of time these differences would disappear and Kashmir would become an integral part of the Indian Republic as any other linguistic and administrative region of the vast country, and the Kashmiris would be happy, contented and prosperous. But till then the Indian leaders no less than the Kashmir leaders had to remain vigilant and devotedly work for the chosen objective exercising the uncommon qualities of statesmanship, patience, forbearance and farsightedness.

It is clear the huge task undertaken was no easy one, particularly when it had been rendered almost impossible by the psychosis generated by the horrible bloodshed and communal hysteria in both the newly created dominions; extremism was rated high, moderation, balance and commonsense were at a discount; yet the hope of accomplishing the noble task lay in reconciling the two nationalisms of India and Kashmir by pruning both of their irrational fringes and overgrowth with the ultimate aim of fostering a common humanist outlook among the Indians and the Kashmiris. If this could be done it would be a splendid achievement.

### *Joint Adventure*

In this adventure, the Indian leaders while guiding their national affairs according to the wishes of the Indians, were expected not to ignore the sentiments and feelings of the Kashmiris, and, in their turn, the Kashmir leaders also were expected to see that in the conduct of State politics nothing was

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done to embarass the Indian colleagues. It was an arduous task indeed, which only highly gifted men could undertake in the conditions prevalent in post-partition period; but if the integration of Kashmir with India was the desideratum the leaders had to become such gifted men.

It is fair to recognise that the Indian leaders made a good start; they were quite generous in handling the Kashmir State affairs. The leaders of the National Conference were afforded fullest opportunity to shape the destiny of their homeland according to their own lights. And this liberal policy was soon given a constitutional shape.

*Impact of Indian Constitution*

Within a surprisingly short period of two years after the achievement of independence, the Indian Constituent Assembly produced a bulky constitution enshrining the lofty ideals which had guided the country for decades in its fight for liberation against British imperialism. It is a document of which any democrat could feel proud. The constitutional structure of Indian society was raised on the firm foundation of secular principles and there was no trace of religious bias in it; caste system was completely ended, untouchability banned, religious and sex distinctions abolished, the rights of man guaranteed and India set on path of democratic freedom.

The preamble of the Constitution says:

> We the people of India, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into Sovereign Democratic Republic and to secure to all citizens:
> *Justice*, social, economic and political
> *Liberty* of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;
> *Equality*, of status and of opportunity, and to promote among them all
> *Fraternity* assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation hereby adopt, enact and give ourselves this constitution.

In recent years controversy has raged round the genuineness and character of Indian Secularism. Pakistani leaders and publicists have derisively referred to it. To incite the faithful but backward sections of the Muslims, the Pakistanis mischievously interpret secularism as creed of the faithless. Sharp differences have been expressed over the definition of secularism by political theoriticians. In his able study, *India as a Secular State*, D.E.Smith explains the ideology in lucid and simple words. According to him a secular state is one "which guarantees indi-

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vidual and corporate religion, deals with the individual as a citizen irrespective of his religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion nor does it seek either to promote or interfere with it"[1]. In order to make the definition clearer Smith adds : "The secular state views the individual as a citizen and not as a member of a particular religious group. Religion becomes entirely irrelevent in defining the terms of citizenship, its rights and duties are not affected by the individual's religious beliefs"[2].

India is a multilingual, multiracial and multireligious country. In this vast land live people professing different faiths speaking various languages and belonging to a variety of racial stock. The framers of the Constitution were therefore deeply anxious and sincerely desirous of laying down the foundation of the new State on a secular basis. The preamble of the Constitution expresses this concern in the resolve of securing to all citizens equality of status and opportunity. This equality is ensured by guaranteeing all the fundamental rights in the body of the Constitution.

The scope of the present work does not include a critical examination of the different sections of the Indian Constitution. Some of these are no doubt not as satisfactory as one would like them to be. But dealing with the subject of Kashmir's accession to India we are specially concerned with the parts of the Constitution which embody the principle of religious non-discrimination in general and public employment in particular. Article 15(1) of the Constitution provides that "the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them". Article 16(1) states that "there shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to unemployment or appointment to any office under the State". The potentialities of these solemn declarations for non-Hindu minorities are immense and cannot be overemphasised in a land where religious impact on the behaviour of the people continues to be tremendous.

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[1] D. E. Smith, *India As a Secular State*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, (1963) p. 4.

[2] Ibid p. 8,

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The adoption of the Constitution gladdened the hearts of the Kashmiris like any other democrats in India and abroad. But what heartened the former most was the special provision which was made regarding their State in it. Like the leaders of the National Congress, the framers of the Constitution fully grasped the reasons that made the relationship between India and Kashmir tenuous and what they could do to make it strong and perennial. Despite the adoption of the full-fledged democratic Constitution by the Indian nation, the Constitution-makers realized that Kashmir had yet to feel one with India in every respect; emotional temperaments had to be adjusted and differences eliminated which could be done only with passage of time.

The Constitution-makers deprecated all attempts made in certain quarters to directly or indirectly foist the decisions of the Indians on the Kashmiris. They knew that in the circumstances then prevailing the Kashmiris would sharply react to the imposition of a constitution that was primarily the handiwork of the Indians because there was no accord on details at that stage. It would therefore be enough for the time being if Kashmiris willingly decided to accept the fundamentals of the Constitution and keep their State within its framework. The Constitution-makers envisaged a transition period during which the Kashmiris would have the opportunity to experience the sort of life that they would have to live as citizens of the Indian Union; only thereafter they would be able to make a voluntary declaration whether or not they would like to get absorbed in the mainstream of India's national life.

### *The Article 370*

Very wisely, Article 370 was inserted in the Constitution as a temporary provision by the Constituent Assembly fully confident that the association with free democratic India would convince the Kashmiris of their bright future by becoming an integral part of the Union. According to this provision the whole of the Article 238 applicable to all other States did not apply to Jammu and Kashmir. The Article 370 further limited the powers of Indian Parliament to make laws about

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matters detailed in the Union List and the Concurrent List. Thus Kashmir State remained within the frame work of the Indian Constitution but became virtually autonomous as the centre was empowered to handle only three subjects on its behalf, namely, External Affairs, Defence and Transport.

It may be noted here that even when the Constitution was being framed and completed voices were raised in the country by communalists and reactionaries against the special treatment of Kashmir, but better counsels prevailed with the Indian leaders and the, now controversial, Article 370 was passed almost unanimously by the Constituent Assembly. It was an earnest of Indian statesmanship.

However, the Constitution-makers envisaged the day not in too distant future but quite early, when the need of the temporary provisions would end and the Article 370 abrogated. But this step was to be taken not at the behests of any extraneous authority, not even at the demand of the Indian public opinion, however strong or united on the subject, but at the express wish and request of the people of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore the concluding part of the Article 370 laid down in clearest possible terms that the President may by public notification declare that this Article shall cease to be operative or will be operative with such exception as specified but the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the Kashmir State to this effect shall be necessary before the President issues such a notification. After the dissolution of the State Constituent Assembly the right to recommend could naturally be exercised either directly by the Kashmiris or by their genuine representatives chosen in a free election.

This was, so to say, the outline of the blue print of a joint adventure for the establishment of a democratic society in indissoluble partnership with Kashmir, drawn by the secular minded leaders of the ancient country just liberated from imperialist yoke. It is obvious that the success of the plan depended on the good work that the two parties could do in their respective spheres of influence. If either failed, the endeavour was bound to end in smoke. It would be best for each

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to be cognizant of its own problems but also to constantly keep in mind the difficulties of the other. The Indian leaders had to prove not only by their words but through their deeds that the Muslims could live like free, respectable and equal citizens of India as envisaged in the Constitution, convinced that their fears at the time of partition were unfounded and imaginary. The Kashmir leaders had to satisfy the State people that through secularism alone they could reach the goal of social democracy for which they had indomitably fought for years and that by remaining with India they could achieve more political and cultural freedom as well as economic prosperity than by acceding to Pakistan. Since the State had become practically autonomous, the National Conference leaders, as the new rulers, had fullest opportunity to create conditions for the fulfilment of such a purpose.

### *Kashmir Goes Ahead*

The Kashmir leaders put their best foot forward. Undeterred by the atmosphere surcharged with communal passion and religious frenzy born of the partition, they assaverated that Kashmir was wedded to secular ideology and would not flinch from it ; the State people would protect their liberty with life-blood and build a society of their dreams.

It is notable that while the Indian subcontinent was enveloped by communal carnage and even Jammu, Muzaffarabad, Poonch and Mirpur were soaked with human blood, true to their traditions of religious tolerance the Kashmiris maintained peace in the Valley. With the slogan "Beware of communal demon ; protect motherland and liberty", the two communities fraternized with each other. When the Pathan tribesmen from Pakistan swooped down with fire and sword to massacre the non-Muslims and create chaos in the land, the Muslim volunteers of the National Conference heroically fought against the fanatical invaders. In the defensive engagements, two Muslim leaders, Abdul Aziz of Muzaffarabad and Mohammed Maqbul Sherwani of Baramulla, nobly laid down their lives reviving the happy memories of such heroic deeds during the hated Afghan rule.

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*State Constitution*

It was decided that though forming part of India, the State would have its own constitution to meet the peculiar needs of the people, its own flag to symbolise Kashmir's individuality, a separate national anthem and a separate head of the State. The elaborate 158-clause Constitution was prepared by the State Constituent Assembly and completed on 17 November 1956; it came into force on 16 January 1957. Unlike the head of government of other units in the Indian Republic, the head of the Kashmir Government was called Prime Minister, and not Chief Minister, of the State. The medium of instruction in the schools was to be Urdu. The Dogra Maharaja was virtually banished and after sometime the hereditary rulership was terminated; an elected head of the State significantly called Sadar-i-Riyast, and not governor as in other States, was to take his place. In this way the sentiments of the Kashmiris were respected and their fears of being absorbed by force in the vast Hindu majority of India allayed; their identity was preserved; their individuality left undiminished.

"Perhaps no country furnishes so curious a record of constant change as Kashmir", observed W. R. Lawrence in 1892, "and it is a matter for surprise that under rapid transition of governments, varying in race, religion and language, the people of the Valley should have retained their peculiar nationality unimpaired"[3]. The National Conference leaders acted to show that this was true even in 1952.

*National Militia Formed*

Appropriately, the National Conference Government recruited able bodied and spirited young men from all communities and classes to form a national militia for the defence of the State against foreign aggression and to maintain peace within the borders of the country. Trained under the direction of Indian commanders the militiamen rendered service in emergencies and during the days of turmoil. The

[3] Op. cit. p. 203

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ban on the recruitment of the Kashmiris in the Indian Military which, it will be recalled, was first imposed by the Mughals and continued ever since, was removed ; many youngmen from the Valley were employed in different ranks of the land army as well as navy and air force according to their physical fitness and intellectual capacity. Thus after four centuries of foreign rule when calculated steps were taken to emasculate them, the Kashmiris were again enabled to enter the defence forces as patriotic soldiers.

*Spread of Education*

But the most gratifying measure above all else was the rapid expansion of literacy in the State. By opening schools at short distance from each other and colleges in big towns, the Government afforded opportunity to the children of the poorer classes to learn upto any standard they desired to do so ; what is remarkable, the education was free from the primary stages to the university level as nowhere else in the Indian Union or Pakistan.

While on the eve of independence the Maharaja's Government spent only Rs. 35 lakhs on education for the entire State, in 1966 the budget allocation for it was Rs. 550 lakhs which is over fifteenfold increase, a creditable achievement by any criterion.

It is the aim of the Government to enable every child of elementary school going age to be at school. Already no fewer than seventy five per cent boys of this age are attending elementary classes.

One aspect of this phenomenal progress deserves special notice. In pre-1947 days the girls education was a problem equally difficult to tackle for Government and the leaders of social reform ; backwardness, prejudice, poverty and a false sense of morality forbade many parents to get their girls educated ; Muslims especially were not eager to send girls to school and were hostile to co-education.

There was marked imbalance in the number of boys and girls at school, the ratio being 12 : 1.

After the termination of the hereditary rulership when

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liberal plans were formulated and schools opened in all towns and big villages, girls came forward in larger numbers than boys to receive education. What is more, the parents at many places no longer hesitated to get the girls admitted in middle and high classes in the boys schools ; consequently, revolutionary changs were wrought by this healthy outlook of the people towards education.

In 1947 there were 15,000 boys and 1150 girls in high schools in the State ; in 1966 the number of boys in these classes increased to 25,600 while the number of girls in the same classes shot up to 8,000 ; thus, while the increase in the number of boys is not even 70% , it is over 760% in the case of the girls. The ratio of imbalance between the number of boys and girls decreased from 12 : 1 to 3 : 1.

The same heartening change occurred in education at the university level. While the number of men students in the colleges has gone up from 6300 to 7100 in the third five-year plan period (1961-66) an increase of about 14% , the number of women students has gone up by about 78% from 1680 to 3000 ; remarkably the imbalance in ratio between boys and girls becomes still less at this level and remains only 2 : 1. It is safe to believe that with this hopeful trend and under the enlightened policy of the Government the disparity in the number of boys and girls in educational institutions at all levels will disappear before long.

### *Rise in Living Standard*

In the economic field too the Kashmir leaders acted with promptitude, courage and revolutionary zeal : Jagirs and big landed estates were abolished ; ceiling was put on the possession of agricultural land ; no one was allowed to have more than six acres of cultivable soil. The land seized from absentee landlords was distributed among landless tenants. In the Valley, it may be noted, landlords were mostly Hindu and the tenants exclusively Muslim. Old debts, amounting to millions of rupees were liquidated to improve the condition of indigent, poverty-stricken, indebted masses. Positively, the Government organised and subsidized the cottage in-

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dustries and helped entrepreneurs to start new small scale manufacturing units. Long disused canals were repaired and new ones dug to irrigate dry and barren lands making thousands of acres cultivable to produce paddy and other food grains. A number of factories were set up, among them a joinery mill and a plyboard factory at Pampore, and a cement factory at Wuyan. Many roads were constructed connecting towns, villages and cities. A transport system, cheap, efficient and regular, was established carrying every day thousands of passengers from one corner of the State to the other. All towns and many villages were electrified.

These improvements in the social and economic life of the State people were by no means insignificant. After a long period of dismal poverty and semi-starvation the Kashmiris were witnessing the dawn of a new era of prosperity which was being shared more or less by all classes and communities ; there was an all-round rise in the standard of living though some sections in the city and towns profitted by it in far larger proportion than those living in the rural areas.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

# PROGRESS IN CULTURAL FIELDS

After independence cultural activities all over the Indian Republic received an impetus. In Kashmir ; too, creative artists were encouraged by the march of events to express their emotions, record their observations and experiences and reflect the aspirations, urges and feelings of the people in their productions. Many attempts were made to generate an intellectual climate congenial to fresh thinking and unfoldment of individual potentialities.

The great poets, Abdul Ahad Dar Azad and Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor, passed away in the early days of the new regime, the former in April 1948 and the latter in June 1952. Master Zind Koul also breathed his last in 1965. But many writers, poets, play wrights, painters and musicians appeared who made their small contributions to literature and art. The few cultural associations which were languishing for want of support were activised and more societies for promotion of free thought, literature and fine arts were formed to vigorously pursue the aim of advancement. Among such bodies were Prem Sangeet Niketan Bazam-i-Adab, Himalaya Bhand

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Theatre, Kala Kendra Club, Kashmir Art Society, Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti, Kashmir Cultural Society and Progressive Artists Association.

The opening of a broadcasting station in Srinagar and the opportunity it afforded to artists for utilization of their talent, provided a further incentive to the cultural movement. The intellectual gifts for which the Kashmiris were known outside the Valley in bygone ages began to have an outlet once again.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 146 of the Jammu and Kashmir Constitution, the Academy of Arts, Culture and Languages was established and its central office located at Srinagar on 24 October 1958. Sadar-i-Riyasat Yuvraj Karan Singh became its patron and Prime Minister Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed its chairman; Mirza Kamal Uddin worked as its first secretary. The Academy was put on a sounder basis and its scope of work widened by Professor Jaya Lal Koul who functioned as its secretary for three years (1963-1966); in fact, the organisation attained maturity through his patient labour and intelligent guidance. In 1963, the Academy was declared an autonomous corporate body and its activities were spread throughout the State. Soon it established contacts with Lalit Kala Akademi, Sangeet Akademi and Sahitya Akademi at New Delhi.

From the inception, the Kashmir Academy formulated an ambitious programme of work to raise the cultural level of the people and encourage and assist the artists and men of letters in their creative activities. Besides giving subsidies for good productions, prizes are granted and awards given to writers, playwrights and poets as well as to painters, musicians and actors for outstanding work. Symposia are held in Urdu, Kashmiri and Dogri from time to time in which local poets in different languages take lively part.

To celebrate the birth anniversary of Poet Tagore, the Cultural Academy held several functions in different parts of the State. The Tagore Memorial Hall was built in Srinagar as a part of the anniversary celebrations and it became the nerve centre of the cultural activities.

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The Cultural Academy compiled, edited and published a number of the manuscripts of works by Kashmiri authors long dead which were either lying in the archives or with private individuals,

Among these books is Abdul Ahad Azad's monumental work, *Kashmiri Zaban Aur Shayiri* (Kashmiri Language and Poetry), in three volumes (with able introductions by Prof. Zaidi and Mohammed Yusuf Teng) ; selected poems in Kashmiri by Nadim, Haba Khatoon, Haqqani, Maqbool Kralwari, Parmanand, Rasul Mir, Wahab Parey and Lakshman Koul's mathnavi, *Samnaama*. The Academy also published selected poems of mystic poets (Swachhkral, Niama Saab, Rahman Dar, Ahmed Batwari, Shah Gafoor, Shah Qalander, Rahim Saab, Wahab Khan and Asad Parey) in two volumes which were edited by Amin Kamil and entitled *Sufi Shaeyir* (Sufi Poets).

A notable production is *Kashur Sargam* in two volumes by Sheikh Abdul Aziz. Owing to lack of adequate facilities for learning the Kashmiri classical music, *Soofiana Kalam*, had been subjected to distortion. Abdul Aziz bent his energy to prepare its scientific notations in the book. After eleven years of hard, intensive research Aziz was successful in publishing two parts and many more are under preparation. Attempts were also made to tape-record the renderings of various *muqams* or ragas by well-known living *ustads* to facilitate further notations.

A *Dewan* containing Abdul Ahad Azad's all poems, published and unpublished, has been compiled and is at present under print.

In 1964 the Cultural Academy started two schools of music and fine arts at Srinagar and Jammu to impart scientific training to desiring students in painting, classical music and dramatics.

The Academy brings out the bi-monthly journal, *Sheeraza*, in urdu under the editorship of Mohammed Yusuf Teng ; it is also published in Kashmiri and that version is edited by Ali Mohammed Lone.

Troupes of artistes (musicians, actors and dancers) are sent to tour India and troupes of Indian artistes are invited to

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give performances in the State before appreciative audiences.

Compared with the heights attained by the ancient giants in the literary and artistic fields, the achievements of the contemporary generation are poor but it would be fair to record that encouraged by the assistance of the Cultural Academy, many young men and women have been prompted to devote their talents to intellectual work.

Space forbids from giving detailed information about the scores of writers, poets and artists who are living and spread all over the Valley or from making critical comments on their works. That will need a volume by itself. But any report on the cultural development of Kashmir after 1947 will be incomplete without mentioning the more known among them.

Master Zind Koul (1884-1965 ) earlier referred to earned the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1954 for the collection of his Kashmiri poems, *Sumaran* (Remembrance), which were rendered into English by himself.

Dina Nath Nadim, a gifted poet of leftist leanings, brought out in 1952 the first monthly periodical, now defunct, *Kwang Posh* (Saffron Flower), in Kashmiri. He introduced some new styles in Kashmiri poetry which were unknown before; in a way he modernised it and led the path. Nadim's opera, *Heemal Nagirai*, is popular and has earned him a distinct place in Kashmiri literature. He has composed a large number of fascinating pieces in charming styles though nothing has been published in a book form so far. He is now working as Deputy Director of Social Education.

Another poet to secure a Sahitya Akademi Award in 1960 for his collection of poems, *Naoroz Saba* (New Year Day Breeze), is Rahman Rahi (b.1925). He has also published (1955) *Sana Vani Saz* (Captivating Music) and *Subhuk Soda* (Morning Joy) (1956).

Ghulam Nabi Firaq (b.1922) has, in collaboration with Rahi, produced *Im Sani Alav*:(These our Calls).

The editor of *Watan*, first weekly in Kashmiri, is G.N. Khayal (b.1936). By temperament a liberal and a radical nationalist, he suffered imprisonment for his views in 1962. His translation of Omar Khayyam in Kashmiri verse (1961) reflects

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the depth of thought in the original. He has also translated Aristotle's *Poetica*. Khayal's collection of own poems has been published (1962) under the title *Pragash* (Dawn) Another collection of his (poems composed in prison) is *Zanjur-i-Hund Saaz* (Music of Chains) (1963). Earlier he compiled and edited *Saam Nama* of Lakshman Joo.

It has already been stated that Amin Kamil (b.1924) has compiled three volumes on Kashmiri mystic poets. His own collection (1955) is contained in *Mas Malar* (Pitcher of Wine). Besides, he has published *Lava ta Prava* (Dew drops & Flashes), *Noor Nama* (Life of Nooruddin) and *Gati Manz Gash* (Light in Darkness) (1960).

A notable work of research in the growth and development of Kashmiri literature is *Kashiri Abdach Tarikh* (History of Kashmiri Literature) by Autar Krishan Rahbar. Produced with devotion and a fair sense of scholarship, the book will be a valuable contribution to Kashmiri literature when its second volume is out. Rahbar has also to his credit two volumes of children's stories entitled *Mukhta Lar* (String of Pearls) and *Tabruk* (Offering).

Akhtar Mohin uddin, a keen observant of human nature, has written short stories on the social life of Kashmiris and published a readable collection, *Sat Sangar* (Seven Peaks), for which he earned Sahitya Akademi Award of 1957. His two novels, *Sonzal* (Rainbow) and *Dod Dag* (Pain and Anguish ), are of considerable merit and a worthy contribution to Kashmiri prose.

Prof. Ghulam Mohiuddin Hajini (b. 1917) is a well-known author in Kashmiri and a popular figure among students. Suspected of abetting anti-government activities, he was kept in detention for many months in 1966. He earned Cultural Academy Award for his work (1961) entitled *Kashiri Nasrachi Kitab* (Book of Kashmiri Prose). He has also written *Kashir Shayiri*.

Ghulam Rasool Nazki has written *Namrood Nama* (Life of Namrood).

Ali Mohammed Lone, a promising young man, Assistant Secretary of the Cultural Academy, has written a novel *Asi ti Chhi Insan* (We too are Human). Jointly with Naji Munawra

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and Moti Lal Saqi, Lone has produced short poems called *Kashir Tuk Bath* (Kashmiri Poetic Pieces). He writes in Urdu as well as in Kashmiri.

Pushkar Bhan a radio artist is known for his humorous hit, *Machama*.

Sufi Ghulam Mohammed, assistant editor of daily *Kidmat*, got a Cultural Academy Award for writing *Loosmaty Taarak* (Faded Stars), a collection of sketches and stories. Another collection of his short stories is called *Shisha ta Sangistan* (Glass and Stoneland).

The most popular Hindu scripture, Bhagwat Geeta, has been translated in Kashmiri verse by Sarwanand Koul Premi. He has also written a biography of a Kashmiri Pandit Saint, Mirza Kak.

Bansi Nirdosh was awarded the Cultural Academy Award for a collection of his short stories, *Bal Marayo* (I Die Frustrated in Love). To his credit is also another collection, *Adam Chhu Yithai Badnam* (Man Blamed For Nothing). He has translated a biography of poet Tagore in Kashmiri.

An award was granted to Muzaffar Azim for his collection of poems, *Zolana*, by the Kashmir Cultural Academy.

Mohammed Yusuf Teng has written a learned commentary on Gulrez.

Among other writers and poets mention may be made of Moti Lal Saqi (poet), Arjandev Majboor, Chaman Lal Chaman (poet), Makhanlal Bekas (poet), Farooq Nazki (poet) Radhey Nath Masarat (poet), Makhan Lal Mahow (poet), Rasool Pampoori, Noor Mohammed Roshan, Shankar Raina, Fazil, Firaq, Rasa Jawdani and Aisha Mastoor.

*Books in English*

Three notable books written in English after independence are the monumental work, *Kashir*, in two volumes (1948) by Dr. G.M.D. Sufi, *A History of Kashmiri Pandits* (1953) by Jai Lal Kilam and *A History of Kashmir* (1964) by P. N. K. Bamzai.

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### *Literature in Urdu*

As Urdu continued to be the official language of the State, it registered further progress and a number of Kashmiris made contributions to its literature in poetry and prose.

Ali Mohammed Lone already referred to, wrote a novel *Shahid Hai Teri Arzoo* (To Wit Your Desire) which secured an award of Kashmir Cultural Academy in 1964.

Noor Shah a prolific author, has produced some novels and a few collections of short stories. His novels, *Ek Rat Ki Malika* (One Night Queen) and *Payel Ke Zakham* (Wounds of Love), and short stories contained in *Nili Jheel Kale Saye* (Blue Lake, Black Reflections), *Be Ghat Ki Nav* (Boat Without Landing Place) and *Vairane Ke Phool* (Flowers of Desert) have been published.

Prof. Hamidi is another story writer of repute. His *Pighalte Phool* (Disintegrating Flowers) can compare with good novels in Urdu literature. He has also to his credit two collections of stories entitled *Baharoon Men Shole* (Flames of Spring) and *Vadi Ke Phool* (Flowers of the Valley). His poetic pieces have been published under the title *Aroose Tomana* (Bedecked Aspirations).

Tej Bahadur Bhan a writer with leftist views has published two collections, *Aurat* (woman) and *Jhelum Ke Sine Par* (On the Bosom of Jhelum).

Two poets with old fashioned ideas and moderate views are Prof. Qazi Ghulam Ahmed and Mir Ghulam Rasool Nazki. Both have published their collections, the former under the title *Harafi Shirin* (Sweet Word) and the latter under *Deedai Tar* (Wet Eye). Nazki's son Farooq, a visionary, promising young man, contemplates publishing his collection of poems, *Du Atsha* (Twin Fires), soon.

Among others who merit mention as authors in Urdu are: Mir Taus, Shahzor, Hamdam, Pushkar Nath, Mukhmoor Hussain and Kuldeep Raina.

### *Hindi and its Writers*

Before independence, the teaching of Hindi was confined to the educational institutions and only a section of the Hindu students displayed some concern to learn it.

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Despite obvious difficulties earnest efforts were made after 1950 to create interest in the common people for the national language of India. For many years these did not bear any fruit, but with untiring zeal lovers of Hindi unflinchingly pursued the aim.

In 1956, Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti of Wardha opened a local branch at Srinagar and the propagation work started in earnest. By holding seminars, debates and competitions, the Samiti attracted attention ; three libraries of Hindi books were established ; centres were opened throughout the Valley where examinations were held to issue qualifying certificates. Then, gradually, some young men and women belonging to all the communities learnt the language. The Samiti began with barely two centres in 1956 but today it has no fewer than 54 centres in the city and different towns including those in far flung areas of Ladakh and Kishtwar. During the past decade as many as 13,288 students appeared in the examinations in different standards of Hindi held under the supervision of the central office at Wardha. It is remarkable that of the examinees 3,522 were Muslim boys and girls some of whom earned distinction by securing high marks.

Encouraged by the increasing literary activity and the progress registered by Hindi, the Kashmiris began to express ideas and ventilate feelings in this language too.

Prof. Prithvi Nath Pushup compiled and edited selected prose and poetic pieces by Kashmiri authors in *Padya Pushpanjali* and *Gadya Pushpanjali*. Himself a poet of taste, he has translated into verse the compositions of some old Kashmiri poets. His two works *Padyanjali* and *Gadyanjali* have been published by the Kashmir Cultural Academy.

Sheshi Shekhar Toshakhani has published a collection of his poems entitled *Thodasa Akash* (A Little Space). Another poet, Rattan Lal Shant, has produced *Khoti Kirnen* (Spurious Rays) which contains the pieces he composed from time to time.

Prithvi Nath Madhup whose *Vay Mukhar Khen* (Those Exhilirating Moments) and *Kavi Parmanand* have been published, is writer of some promise.

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Another Hindi writer who deserves mention is Kashi Nath Dar who has edited anthologies *Shat Dal, Nibandh Kumkum* and *Pravahini* (River) in two parts.

Among those who participate in Hindi kavi sammelans or write short stories and deserve mention are Mohan Nirash (poet), Hari Krishen Koul, Chaman Lal Sapru, Chaman Lal Hakhu, Dwarika Nath Giggu (poet), Janki Nath Kamal and Satya Lal Rasik.

Some selected Hindi poems of Dr. Mohammed Ayub Khan of the Hindi Department of Kashmir University, who takes lively interest in the progress of Hindi among students, have been published in a book by the Rashtrabhasha Prachar Samiti.

Two other organizations which are devoted to the spread of Hindi in the Valley are Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Bhartiya Sahitiyakar Sangam.

*Play Wrights and Actors*

Two budding play-wrights of modern Kashmir are Radha Krishen Braru and Moti Lal Kemu ; the former studied at Kala Kendra, New Delhi, and the latter at the College of Music, Dance and Dramatics, Baroda. Before becoming a play-wright and an actor, Kemu had training in dancing at Baroda. Both Braru and Kemu are energetically engaged in reviving the dramatic art of Kashmir. While Braru has organised the *bhands* (the descendants of ancient caricaturists) of Vahthor under Himalayan Bhand Theatre, Kemu is engaged in revitalising the disused faculties of *bhagats* of Akingam under the leadership of Mohammed Sultan. Five theatre groups which took part in a dramatic competition in July 1966 were: 1. Kashmir National Theatre, 2. Jawahar Dramatic Club, 3. TASK (Theatre Arts Seminary of Kashmir), 4. The Masked Ones (of Regional Engineering College) and 5. DARSHAK. Jawahar Club won the first prize for the Hindi play "Kanchan Rang", Braru's *Yahoo* too earned a prize while the *Puz Apuz* (Truth and Untruth) performed by bhagats was widely appreciated.

*Za Gabbar* a play depicting the composite culture and communal unity in Kashmir written by Prem Nath Dar was staged at Delhi and appreciated by the audience.

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Other play-wrights are Som Nath Zutshi (who has translated Ibsen in Kashmiri), Pushkar Nath Bhan, and Som Nath Sadhu whose short plays and humorous features broadcast from Kashmir Radio are liked.

A promising journalist and art critic is Shamim Ahmed Shamim who began his career as editor of *Sheeraza*, but, relinquishing that semi-official job, is now independently running the weekly *Aaina* which is widely read by educated people in all classes for its humour, incisive analysis of political events, sarcastic remarks and bold comments on men and matters.

*Painters*

A number of Kashmiris have distinguished themselves as painters.

G. R. Santosh (b. 1929) comes first in this line. Starting as a signboard writer, Santosh took to the art seriously and studied under N. S. Bendre at Baroda. Completing the course in 1958, he plunged into a creative life and produced scores of delightful canvases. His work has been exhibited not only in Indian cities but also at several world capitals. He has held many one-man shows of his paintings. He is the holder of National Akademi Award (1957) and the recipient of other prizes.

Santosh is a short story writer. His Urdu novel, *Samander Pyasa hai* (Sea is Thirsty), earned a Cultural Academy Award (1965).

Triloke Kaul (b.1925) is a graduate of the Punjab University. He worked for some time as a decorator and studied the fine art at Baroda where he earned his degree in 1957. At present he is working as the Director School of Designs in Kashmir.

Koul's paintings have been hung at many exhibitions where they were commended. He is recipient of a National Akademi Award (1961). Alongwith Santosh and others he has held several exhibitions of paintings. In October 1966, he held a one-man show in Bombay.

Rattan Parimoo (b. 1935) is a product of Baroda School and is at present working as Reader in History of Art in the

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Fine Art Faculty of M. S. University. Parimoo studied at Coutauld Institute of Art at London for three years. He has travelled on the continent and USA visiting art museums and galleries. For his paintings exhibited at different cities he has earned several prizes and awards. His one-man show was held at Delhi (1964) and at Calcutta (1965). He also participated in painting exhibitions in U. K. (1962).

Miss Kishori Koul (b. 1935) is the first woman in the history of Kashmir to be a painter. Playing with the brush to while away time as an invalid in a sanitorium, she acquired zest for the art. This took her to Baroda where she studied under Bendre and earned Master's degree with distinction in 1965.

Miss Kishori has participated in painting exhibitions of local as well as all-India importance and secured a few prizes. Her one man shows were held at Aligarh University (1966), at Bombay (1966) and at Calcutta in November 1966. She is the founder-member of Baroda School of Artists and Kashmir Art Society.

Besides being a painter, Kishori writes short stories and gives talks on art from the Kashmir Radio. Recently she played the role of a heroine in the feature film on the life of Poet Mahjoor which was produced by Prabhat Mookerjee and Balraj Sahney.

Bansi Parimu (b. 1933), painter and sculptor, is another self taught artist whose paintings have been hung in many exhibitions in Srinagar and outside Kashmir. Recipient of several prizes and awards, Parimu held one-man shows at Ambala in 1954, at New Delhi in 1959, at Bombay in 1963 and at Ahmedabad in 1966. His interests are photography and farming. Parimu founded and organised Young Artists Club in 1962 and is also a founder-member of Kashmir Art Society.

S.N. Bhat and P.N. Kachru two other notable artists both self taught have taken part in several exhibitions in Srinagar and elsewhere. Kachru gave a one-man show of his paintings at Calcutta in 1965. Both are now employed in the School of Designs at Srinagar.

Two artists who have persistently followed the realistic style, are D.N. Wali and Mohan Raina; the former has exhibited

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numerous beautiful and pleasing landscapes in Delhi and Calcutta, the latter went to U.S.A. for higher studies and is now employed in an American University in giving lessons on ancient Indian paintings.

Some other painters who deserve mention are Nissar Aziz, Suraj Tikku, Bhusan Koul, Maharaj Kishan Bhat, Shiban Kav, Bhavanesh Raina and Gayoor Hassan, all of whom have exhibited their paintings at one place or another and received appreciation of discerning critics.

### *Master Craftsmen*

The revival and expansion of cottage industries afforded opportunities to many people to demonstrate their talent in different indigenous arts like shawl weaving, carpet designing, paper machie and wood carving. Ghulam Qadir Rangrez and Ghulam Qadir Lala, two master craftsmen, were awarded national awards by President of India, the former in 1964 for exquisite workmanship in *kani shawl* and the latter in 1965 for carpet designing.

### *Musicians*

In the dark period of history music, once in a flourishing state, had become almost extinct. Now musicians too began to rise. *Sufiana Kalam* and *Chhakri*, the two forms of music peculiar to Kashmir which had just survived through efforts of individual lovers of art, were revived. Side by side the classical Indian music as well as the light music were introduced and made fashionable. A number of young men and women acquired the knowledge and the practice of playing on different musical instruments.

Even before 1947, Jagan Nath Shivpuri a young ambitious, hard working boy with sweet voice studied vocal and classical music. He had the gift and natural aptitude for acquiring it. Facing innumerable difficulties and social odium, he introduced the music among the youth of the Valley. He founded Prem Sangeet Niketan which did much pioneering work in the field. Now the principal of the Niketan, Shivpuri has distinguished himself as an artiste of repute.

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Mohanlal Aima, a law graduate of the Punjab University, is a self taught musician whose potentialities as a vocalist developed while working on the staff of the Radio Kashmir. He soon joined the All India Radio, earned a distinction and was deputed to Kabul on a musical mission. He is at present in charge of the Music Section of the Indian Television Centre at New Delhi where he plans and directs its various programmes.

Shamboo Nath Sopori a graduate of Prayag Sangeet Samiti in instrumental music (Sitar), is lecturer of music at Womens College, Srinagar. Belonging to a family of musicians he has earned a reputation for being an expert sitarist as well as vocalist. His son Bhajanlal is a good player on Santoor.

There are several parties and individual artistes broadcasting instrumental and vocal music from the Radio Kashmir some of whom deserve to be mentioned.

Mohammed Abdullah Tibet Bakal is considered to be the best and sweetest in the *Sofiana Kalam*. Habib Ullah and Ghulam Ahmed Soofi have specialised in *Chhakri*. Two parties of known musicians are G.N. Dolwal and his companions, and Balpuri and his associates.

A specialist in the ragas and raginis of *Soofiana Kalam* is Ustad Ramzanjoo. Two other masters of this instrumental music are Ghulam Mohammed Qalinbaft and Asad Ganai.

The only expert player of the peculiar musical instrument of the Valley, *Saz*, is Ghulam Nabi Bhat. A musician who can handle with equal ease sitar, sarangi and tabla is Abdul Ghani Namtahal. Sana Ullah is known for his dexterity in playing on Rabab.

Vidhlal Dhar (soofiana and classical) is a well-known devotee of the Muse and an expert player on Santoor. His two daughters, Rageshwari Mattoo and Jaijaivanti, are vocalists. His third daughter, Raj Kumari, had given evidence of growing into a virtuoso but unfortunately she met with a fatal accident in Delhi in 1964.

A budding instrumentalist (violin) is Vijaya Bazaz who obtained her M.Mus. degree from the Baroda College of Music,

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Dance and Dramatics in 1966. She was awarded a gold medal for being the best girl in her class.

Among the singers of Kashmiri songs and gazals from Radio Kashmir who have fascinated the listeners and captivated many hearts are Raj Begum and Nasim Akhtar (vocalists). Mention may also be made of Swaroop Chand (Principal, Sangeet Mahavidyalaya), Raj Karni Koul (lecturer in sitar), Dulari Koul, Nirmala Chhatoo Mohan Wali, Asha Koul, Motilal Khazanchi, Qadir Bhat of Vahthor, Mohammed Sultan of Makhdoom Munder, Abdul Khaliq of Bijbihara and Ghulam Mohammed Bhat of Manz Gund, all good singers.

Kamal Bhat of Vahthor is another expert player on Kashmiri sitar; so are Dwarka Nath Koul (light music) and Kanwal Kishan Jala (of Paluskar Sangeet Sadan). Sarwanand Koul is a tabla player and Virendra Mohan a flutist.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

# RULE BY ROD AND TERROR

The rapid progress in social, economic and cultural fields after Kashmir's accession to India would have been inconceivable in pre-1947 days under the monarchical rule of the Dogras; it was surely conducive to the fructification of the plan for integration of the State with the Union.

But, unfortunately, the National Conference leaders were intolerant of opposition. It was in no way surprising or unexpected that as a result of the harrowing events which followed partition, secularism was at a discount, particularly with a large section of the State Muslims who opposed the new regime. The situation demanded the best qualities of head and heart: Objective assessment, tolerance towards dissent, power of persuasion, sweet reasonableness, sense of history and calm attitude. But armed with absolute power the new rulers in their impatience to convert public opinion to secularism, if need be by force and coercion, did not hesitate to use extremely repressive methods and to violate many canons of social justice and principles of democracy.

### *Harsh Measures Adopted*

The first Prime Minister of the National Conference Government was Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, the veteran

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leader of the freedom struggle, who assumed power immediately after the instrument of accession to India was signed and ratified. During his seven years rule thousands of political workers were consigned to prison, mostly without trial for varying periods extending to three years merely because they held views unpalatable to the Government. Among the prisoners were not only pro-Pakistan politicians but also those who cherished faith in secularism but were critical of the working of the administration and doings of the National Conference workers. Sheikh Abdullah invited brigades of the Indian Army which were deployed all over the State on its border to defend it against invasion from Pakistan. These forces were frequently though indirectly employed to intimidate and silence opposition irrespective of the consideration whether it was responsible and democratic or wild and communal. Each and every opponent of the Government was tarred with the same brush ; liquidation and not conversion of critics became the aim of the rulers.

An ordinance entitled "Enemy Agents Ordinance" was promulgated to arrest and summarily try those who were suspected of pro-Pakistan leanings with harsh punishment of rigorous imprisonment for the guilty. The Preventive Detention Act and Defence of India Rules vehemently denounced as lawless laws by the National Conference leaders in the days of the Maharaja were pressed into service and freely used to indiscriminately imprison opponents on the charge of opposing the Government and not falling in line with the views of the National Conference.

### *Hooliganism Encouraged*

Concerned that the incarceration of a large number of people will bring the regime into disrepute outside the State, a more reprehensible method of dealing with the opponents was ingeniously devised : A band of ragtag and bobtail was organised to humiliate and demoralise the critics. The police force was doubled and a persecution wing known as Special Police Centre established under a notorious bully, Ghulam Qadir Ganderbali, head constable promoted superintendent, to maltreat and torture suspects and release them only when their spirit had been sufficiently broken disabling them to oppose the regime.

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Today when Sheikh Abdullah has become champion of liberty and Kashmir people's right of self-determination and a staunch supporter of Indo-Pak friendship, it seems unbelievable that during his stewardship unheard of barbarities were perpetrated by him or with his knowledge and approval to subjugate patriots for demanding the same right. However, it is manifest that such methods of running the administration and governing the country were hardly helpful in strengthening the forces of secularism or in securing free will of the Kashmiris for integration of the State with India; it only embittered the Kashmiris and assisted the Pakistan authorities in making their propaganda effective and in sowing seeds of hostility towards India in the Valley and other parts of the State mostly inhabited by the Muslims.

### *People Alienated*

If the National Conference leaders had thought that the repressive measures would be abandoned after a short period and the State restored to normalcy as a result of liberal, political and economic reforms, they were soon disillusioned. Suppression made people resentful and the more they opposed the regime the more drastic were the measures the Government applied to put them down. A vicious circle had set in which seemed nowwhere to break.

Because the objective of integrating Kashmir with India by the voluntary assent of the people was a joint venture involving the interests of both, the Indian leaders should have remonstrated with the Kashmir Government and impressed upon the National Conference leaders that it was only through a climate of consent that the purpose could be achieved, and that by alienating the goodwill of the Kashmiris they were jeopardising any chance of success. But, depending on the false reports of the Kashmir leaders that the suppressed people were one and all pro-Pakistan conspirators, the Indian Government connived at the misdeeds. This was a grave error of judgement which proved harmful in the long run. Had the Indian leaders displayed the required courage to firmly stand by Kashmir democracy and upheld the civil liberties and human

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rights of the Kashmiris, the accession problem would have found a solution by now to the satisfaction of democratic India.

That despite the termination of Dogra rule, the implementation of the revolutionary economic reforms and the rising standard of life in the State, the National Conference leaders became unpopular there could be no doubt; it could be read in the angry looks of the people and smelt in the air by any keen observer.

### *Hindu Communalism Challenges*

In India too, secularism did not have a smooth sailing. It is one thing, though praiseworthy in itself, to produce a splendid democratic constitution enshrining human values and high ideals, but it is different to practise the noble professions in conducting public affairs and directing every day life. In spite of the herculean efforts of the top Congress leaders, Hindu revivalism became increasingly violent in temper and minatory in behaviour. It received sufficient nourishment from the poisonous anti-Hindu propaganda incessantly carried on across the border in Pakistan. Worse still, Hindu narrow-mindedness began to invade the Congress citedal. The Muslims in India found themselves in an unenviable position; they were suspected of harbouring disloyal tendencies; they were denied fair share in civil services and in recruitment to armed forces notwithstanding the declared equality of all communities and individuals before the basic law laid down in the egalitarian Constitution. Even in Kashmir the ratio of Muslim entrants in Central Government departments was insignificant and far from their ratio in State population though suitable candidates were becoming increasingly available for the jobs. This gave a big jolt to the thinking of the Kashmir Muslims and augmented their communal propensities.

Encouraged by the rejuvenation of Hindu communalism in India, the Dogras of Jammu founded Praja Parishad (now local branch of Jan Sangh) to advocate the lost cause of Hindu supremacy in State politics and administration which held sway before. It was destined to come into conflict with the Government seeking social justice for the Muslims. Every

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reform was a thorn in the side of the Dogras who fiercely opposed it. The Parishad launched anti-government movements, the agitators were arrested and imprisoned first in 1949, then in 1950, and for a third time in 1952. There was an uproar in the Indian Press over it and the Indian Government could not help feeling concerned. Then an astounding event took place which had far reaching consequences in State politics. One Central Minister, Gopalaswamy Ayyengar, a former State Premier, was hurriedly despatched by the Union Government to Jammu in 1952 to put pressure on the Kashmir Government to release the Dogra agitators. At the time hundreds of Kashmiri Muslims were also behind the bars; but neither the Indian Press raised any voice demanding their liberty nor did the Indian Government think it fit to advise the Kashmir Government to release them. This difference in the treatment of Dogra Hindus and Kashmir Muslims could not nourish the roots of secularism in the State nor did it strengthen the unity of Kashmiris with the Indians.

### *Abdullah Vacillates*

Sheikh Abdullah guessed the implications of this discriminatory attitude on the part of Indian leaders and he felt disconcerted. Was it only to suppress the Kashmiris that he was in power? It now dawned on him that he was becoming an unwanted figure because he had trodden over the aspirations and emotions of the people he had pledged to serve. Rather thoughtlessly and indifferent to consequences, he made an unexpected volte face and played foul with India. He started giving expression to ideas which were in crass contradiction to the views he had loudly voiced for over twelve years, Overlooking his own faults of omission and commission, he unsparingly denounced Indian leadership and Congress nationalism. He virtually and unilaterally tore to pieces the agreement that had been solemnly made by the Indian and the Kashmir leaders for promoting secular idealism. India felt aghast, the Congress leaders were flabbergasted and for the Indian Government it was a trying time indeed.

Sheikh Abdullah's forthright but imprudent utterances led to his deposition, arrest and imprisonment on 8 August 1953

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at the hands of his unscrupulous lieutenant, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, who became the second National Conference Prime Minister. Along with Sheikh Abdullah hundreds of his supporters including cabinet minister, Mohammed Afzal Beg, and some other prominent leaders and legislators were consigned to prison. There were widespread disturbances in the Valley when police resorted to firing at several places to bring the excited people under control.

The defection of Sheikh Abdullah and his group should have occasioned heart searching and a reassessment of the Kashmir policy in the light of the principles which had guided the Constitution-makers. This was not done at all; the minds at New Delhi did not travel that way. A flattering unction was laid to the ailing soul that Sheikh Abdullah was solely responsible for the mess and a strong hand was needed to deal firmly with unfriendly sections in the Valley. The Indian Government failed to diagnose the malady which afflicted State politics and therefore the ill conceived policy continued to operate.

### *Nationalist Muslims Fall Out*

A little while before this sad episode, Ghulam Mohiuddin Kara, a pillar of the National Conference, fell out with the ruling party and started in early June 1953 a new body, Political Conference, which rallied a number of workers under its banner. Depressed by the increasing sullen attitude of the people, Kara thought that the chances of Kashmir remaining with India had disappeared as a result of the misdeeds of his erstwhile colleagues no less than the narrow minded policy of the Indian leaders. A staunch supporter of Kashmir Nationalism, though known for his pro-Pakistan slogans with which pamphlets and statements issued by him are adorned, Kara would prefer to see the Valley attaining an independent status.

Having been held in detention for over a year, M.A. Beg, after release convened a meeting of Sheikh Abdullah's supporters and formed the Plebiscite Front which, as the name indicates, demands the holding of a free and fair plebiscite to finally solve the accession dispute. The Front is also pledged

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to fight for the right of self determination of the State people in general.

*Bakshi Intensifies Repression*

With the exit of Sheikh Abdullah from the Government, the chapter opened by the inclusion of Article 370 in the Indian Constitution to gradually reconcile the two nationalisms of India and Kashmir through patient labour and tolerance of dissent, came to a close. By this time Hindu revivalists and reactionaries had been able to exert sufficient baneful influence on the policies of the Central Government. Nehru who is on record to have frequently stated in public gatherings and Press statements that the Union Government would bow before the will of the Kashmiris, harped on a different tune. He declared that the accession was complete and the question of a plebiscite did not arise. Blame for the basic change in policy was irrelevently laid at the door of Pakistan for entering into military pacts with the Western powers, particularly the United States of America.

It was now assumed that Kashmir Muslims were essentially communal in outlook and only firm determination to hold the State at any cost would make them forget the possibility of any chance of accession to Pakistan. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed assured India that by providing large sums to be spent for the welfare of the Kashmiris the Indian Government would be able to achieve the new aim. The old adage that man does not live by bread alone was conveniently forgotten.

There is no gainsaying the fact that India helped the Kashmir Government with more liberal grants during the Bakshi regime and a further progress was registered in educational and economic spheres. But these laudable achievements were offset by the savage repression let loose in the period. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed added some more laws to the armoury of repression: Any citizen could be detained in prison for five years at a stretch and the Government was under no obligation to inform the detenu about the grounds of detention; the helpless victim could be rearrested after release and detained for another term of five years. Bakshi, besides having a large

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number of goondas in his pay, recruited a force euphimistically called the Peace Brigade which was frequently employed to beat the opponents and silence them. He imposed heavy restrictions on the State Press and peremptorily banned publication of newspapers which were critical of his misconceived policy and atrocious deeds. He seldom permitted a new journal to come out unless he was convinced that the editor would play his tune. During his days public meetings could never be held in the Valley for political purposes unless they were meant to support the views and the activities of the ruling clique.

*Moral Relapse*

The loss of political rights under the National Conference Government was but small in comparison with the moral degeneration which set in as a result of the terrible suppression. Hypocricy, dissimulation, lying and cowardice reappeared in the character of the Kashmiris. They no longer spoke out their minds fearlessly. The network of espionage and the fear of being reported as an individual harbouring anti-Government views made a Kashmiri suspect every one he met. It was a deplorable state of affairs surely in no way conducive to the reconstruction of the moral and cultural life of the people so essential for the establishment of a democratic society.

Side by side with the practice of strong arm methods, Bakshi launched upon a campaign of corruption of both supporters and opponents by any means at his disposal. By giving tempting bribes in the shape of huge sums, government jobs or P.W.D. and Forest contracts he corrupted political workers, journalists, religious leaders and others inside and outside the State. His route permit system under which a permit holder could earn thousands while sitting at home gained notoriety. There was no branch of administration and no sphere of public life where bribery was not openly practised. To be corrupt carried no stigma, no discredit for an official or a public worker.

*Inroads into Autonomy*

Sheikh Abdullah was jealous of Kashmir's autonomy and resisted its infringement, at any rate in the early years of his

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premiership, but Bakshi, to curry favour with the Indian public opinion, allowed frequent inroads into it. Within a few years after the adoption of the Indian Constitution, a number of Presidential notifications were issued to curtail the autonomy of the State without the express desire of the Kashmiris. Among the measures adopted were: Application of fundamental rights Article, extension of the Jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and authority of the Auditor-Generel of India, transfer of Services to the Union list, approval by the Union Planning Commission of State development programmes, financial allocation from the centre, abolition of the customs barrier, integration of Services, and the association of the State with the Northern Zonal Council.

In almost every public utterance, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed in season and out of season declared that Kashmir had finally and irrevocably decided to remain with India; the only problem facing the State was, in his opinion, to liberate that part of the country which was in the occupation of Pakistan. To paçify the ruffled consience of Indian Democracy, he would dogmatically add that every Kashmiri supported him in these assertions.

Under Bakshi's regime general elections to the State legislature were held twice in 1957 and 1962. As has been universally recognised now even in India, on both occasions the elections were rigged and by hook or by crook Bakshi got his hand-picked men declared elected to the legislature. Only three seats were allowed to be captured in 1962 by the Praja Parished in Jammu so that Indian public opinion is not antagonised.

### *Deceptive Normalcy*

Seven years of steam rolling had at last brought about a stability in Kashmir and Bakshi was accepted as a successful administrator and a hero. The chaotic conditions of Pakistan politics which culminated in the establishment of military dictatorship in that country in 1958, were extremely helpful to Bakshi in bringing about the "normalcy". He was admired and his methods recommended for emulation to inexperienced and "less gifted" politicians holding office; he was lionised

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wherever he travelled in India. The Indian leaders believed or pretended to believe that the Kashmir problem had ended and any one who had the courage to point out that the seeming calm was deceptive was considered an incorrigible sceptic, if not worse. A structure had been laboriously raised which appeared strong, massive and well built. Kashmir had become safe, impregnable and inseparable part of India ; at any rate, so thought the Indian politicians as well as the National Conference leaders.

Then in the beginning of 1963 cracks began to appear and at the end of the year a chasm yawned which swallowed Bakshi. He was blown off with his own petard. The house of cards built by him with fabulous wealth of India and the blood and tears of the Kashmiris came down with one gust of public resentment.

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## CHAPTER SIX

# A MISSED OPPORTUNITY

There is sufficient reason to believe that in 1962 Prime Minister Nehru was feeling concerned about Kashmir and pondering over the unpleasant developments.[1] He was biding time to put the sinking boat of the State politics on an even keel. When in 1963 the Congress adopted the Kamraj Plan the Kashmiris were overjoyed to learn that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed had, in a spirit of bravado, declared to relinquish office and Nehru encouraged him to do so.

It was fervently expected that the fresh development will lead to a revision of India's Kashmir policy and afford a chance to the progressive group in the National Conference headed by G. M. Sadiq to come to power. The progressives had for some time made it known that they were unhappy and anxious to create a peaceful climate by restoring civil liberties, giving clean administration and introducing democratic practices, thus retrieving the good name of the Indian Union.

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[1]After an extensive tour of the Kashmir Valley in June 1962, the author had some correspondence with Premier Nehru in which the deteriorating political conditions in the State were discussed. This correspondence giving an indication of Nehru's mind is published as Appendix B at the end of the book.

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Acceptance of his resignation by Nehru was shocking to Bakshi. He regretted the mistake in stepping down from Premiership when it was too late to retrace the step. But through underhand manoeuvrings and objectionable tactics he managed to foil the progressive group in the ruling party from coming to power and despite the advice of Nehru to read the writing on the wall, he succeeded in getting a government of his own proteges reconstituted in the State with Shamsuddin as Prime Minister.

Then, suddenly, the pent-up feelings of the Kashmiris got a way of expression. Prophet Mohammed's holy hair lodged at Hazratbal Shrine in Srinagar was stolen by unknown hands. How this sacrilege took place is still shrouded in mystery but it shook the Valley to its depths; the Kashmiris rose like an unbound giant to express anger. Soon the avowedly religious movement assumed an unmistakable political complexion. The huge antigovernment demonstrations which were held all over the Valley paralysed the administration. For days members of the State Cabinet had to remain confined within the four walls of their homes. Bakshi was conspicuous by his absence. When his brother, Abdul Rashid, general secretary of the National Conference, attempted to address a gathering of infuriated people at Lal Chowk,in Srinagar, he was manhandled and his car smashed. Some property of the Bakshi brothers acquired since 1947 by dubious means was consigned to fire by angry mobs.

All the opposition parties, political and semi political, in the Valley including Sheikh Abdullah's Plebiscite Front and Ghulam Mohi-uddin Kara's Political Conference, joined hands and a powerful working body known as the Action Committee was formed to guide the gigantic movement. A new figure Mohammed Farooq, a lad of nineteen years, ebullient, courageous and dashing, donning the hereditary mantle of Mirwaiz Jama Masjid, appeared on the scene to lead the orthodox and conservative Muslim opinion. He too offered his growing strength to the Action Committee and with this reinforcement the movement assumed formidable proportions. Never since 1932 had the Kashmiris presented a united front for a cause as in winter 1963-64.

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It is remarkable that complete communal harmony prevailed during the period of the upheaval and not a single Hindu—man, woman or child—was molested. While demanding the restoration of the sacred relic the people left nobody in doubt that Bakshi and his brothers were the most hated men in the State and until they were removed from positions of power and influence the Kashmiris would not feel conciliated. This served as an eye-opener to all who had maintained a complacent attitude over Kashmir.

Under the compelling circumstances Union Government consulted safety of the State in bidding Bakshi to behave properly. Shamsuddin Ministry was asked to step down and hand gres the reins of the Government to Sadiq and his band of prodifferentsives. This opened a new chapter in Kashmir history since from the one through which the people had passed over October 1947.

In the contemporary history of Kashmir the people have on two occasions, in July 1931 and December 1963, shown that exasperated by the misdeeds of the rulers they can assert their will and make it difficult, if not impossible, for the Gevernment to function. In winter 1963-64 despite inclement weather the Kashmiris proved that the bestiality of Bakshi's hordes had not succeeded in killing their spirit. Such massive and unprecedented were the demonstrations that New Delhi was induced to take notice and adopt measures to mollify the agitated people.

*Dim Realization of Real Problem*

Dimly it began to be realized at this juncture that there was something basically wrong with the Kashmir policy pursued by the Central Government. For the first time in sixteen years the Indian Press published long, more or less accurate and revealing, accounts of the highhandedness and shameful methods with which the Kashmiris had been ruled by the National Conference governments. Some light was thrown on the rampant corruption fostered by Bakshi and his brothers and the seething unrest which had brought about the uprising. Almost overnight Bakshi, the ideal administrator and beloved leader, became the villain of the piece; he was presented,

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now quite justifiably, in dark colours as one responsible for bringing discredit to India in Kashmir.

Whether the Indian leaders realized that the Kashmir problem was the product of violation of the spirit which guided the Constitution-makers and that the Central Gevernment had for past years followed a wrong method in bringing about the integration of the State with India, is doubtful. Probably they never thought on those lines. But it is clear that profiting by long and bitter experience and re-enthused by the idealism which inspired patriots in the early period of Kashmir's freedom struggle, a batch of National Conference workers under leadership of G. M. Sadiq, felt convinced that for promotion of secularism and democracy and with the object of emotionally integrating Kashmir with India it was imperative that there should be complete reorientation of State policies: civil liberties and human rights of the people should be restored, detenus and political prisoners released, complete freedom of expression granted, and the Muslims particularly convinced by deeds and not merely by words that their religious, political and cultural rights would be safe if they continued to remain with India.

Though no doubt in consonance with the liberal spirit of the Constitution-makers, it was a daring enterprise upon which Sadiq and his colleagues decided to embark. There was wide scepticism in the country about the efficacy of this belated move to untie the tangled skien of the vexing imbroglio. But the disturbing events of the 1963-64 winter left no choice for the Indian Government but to give the alternative a trial. Being the antithesis of his political philosophy and practice, Bakshi offered stout opposition to the liberalisation but the furious wind blowing against him in the country forced him to yield. Sometime later he plotted to overthrow the Government but was promptly arresed and imprisoned on grave charges of corruption and abuse of official position.[1]

[1] The Kashmir Government framed a charge sheet against Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed accusing him of corruption, abuse of his official position as Jammu & Kashmir Premier etc. A one-man enquiry commission consisting of Justice Rajagopala Ayyangar was appointed to go into the charges and submit its findings to the Government. The report of the Commission is awaited at the time of writing.

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*Brave Statesmanship*

Coming to power, Sadiq took one bold step after another. He astounded the people everywhere by showing that tolerance and patience paid, and that the policy of liberalisation and democratisation alone was conducive to restoration of peace and tranquillity in the State. He emptied the jails of all the detenus and political prisoners. Even Shiekh Abdullah and his colleagues charged by Bakshi with conspiracy to overthrow the State and join Kashmir with Pakistan by force, were released. The infamous Peace Brigade was disbanded. Freedom of expression and association as well as freedom of Press heavily curtailed for seventeen years were restored. There were no doubt some trying times for the State administration and weeks of anxiety for the Indian Government, but ultimately liberalisation proved to be the right and wise statesmanship. For people became relaxed and less hostile to the administration; the tension in the atmosphere disappeared to a considerable extent; a bit of real normalcy returned.

The liberalisation policy set new forces working in the State. On the one hand it encouraged the moribund secularism and democracy to revive and get organised, on the other, it weakened the pro-Pakistan elements because the main plank of their antigovernment agitation —suppression of free voice— had been removed. In the new climate extremism gradually began to lose appeal and a process of conversion of Muslims through persuasion and reasoning was put into operation ; the Muslims who preferred social democracy to rule in the name of Islam were heartened because they were given a hearing by their co-religionists.

The Relic Restoration Movement had all but destroyed the National Conference. As a result of the anti-people measures of the Government for seventeen long years this organisation had lost following and existed only in name. The upheaval reduced it to shambles; it was thoroughly discredited and its leaders became an unwanted lot. Liberalisation gave National Conference a new lease of life. With the fall of Bakshi, undesireable groups and goondas hastened to quit it or were made to go while going was good; there was purging on a wide

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scale; fresh hopes were raised in the minds of the people that the organisation might after all be able to attain the goal of a welfare state.

*Eight Months of Healthy Developments*

The enemies of liberalism among the Muslims and the Hindus did not stay put while the Sadiq Government was winning one post after another in its onward march towards social democracy. Neither the Muslim communalists nor the Hindu reactionaries let the grass grow under their feet while the ruling party was consolidating its stand and reviving the political organisation. Taking advantage of the liberal policy the anti-India and pro-Pakistan sections came into the open and started new platforms to propagate their ideology and popularise their views. In the beginning especially immediately after the release of Sheikh Abdullah and other political leaders in April 1964, the whole country seemed to be flocking to hear them. But gradually their exhortations lost force and they were cut down to their proper size. It would have been unrealistic to believe that merely with the declaration of a new liberal policy the influence of pro-Pakistan politicians would disappear or become negligible, and that it did not pose a problem. However, it was wisely decided that the adversary's challenge was to be met on a political plane through spread of healthy ideas, modern concepts of freedom and rational beliefs.

Judging from the results shown during eight months of liberalisation, it was no overoptimism to think that Sadiq Government might have been successsful given time and patient hearing. But the Hindu reactionaries would give it neither. There are in Kashmir and outside powerful sections among the Hindus who believe that Muslims can never be loyal to India. If that is so, it would follow that India can have no claim on Kashmir State which is overwhelmingly Muslim. But prejudiced minds are nowhere interested in logic; these people do not understand that by holding such views they are rendering the emotional integration of the Kashmiris and Indians impossible of achievement.

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*Reactionaries up in Arms*

Be that as it may, the anti-Muslim ultra nationalists have not only well organised parties to propagate their ideology, they are also found in strength within the Congress fold; they have vociferous members in the Indian Parliament. Unabashed, they incessantly stress that Kashmir can be held by force and should be held by force in utter disregard of consequences in the national and international sphere. As mentioned earlier, they opposed tooth and nail grant of autonomy to Kashmir in the Indian Constitution. Unsuccessful in this endeavour, they have been anxious all along during the past years to smother the spirit with which the Constitution-makers inserted the provision while subsequently the Kashmir issue was being handled by the Indian Government from time to time. If the Government openly or tacitly approved the repressive policy in Kashmir, the ultra nationalists had much say in it. And when the repression produced the restlessness in the State they only justified their anti Muslim outlook and blamed the Indian Government for not administering a stronger dose of their nostrum.

It is remarkable that in the eight months when the policy of liberalisation and democratisation was in operation no political or communal disturbance took place in the Valley as to give rise to any fears about the future. Of course the voices and opinions ruthlessly suppressed for seventeen years began to be raised indicating certain good and bad tendencies. Among the latter was the religious approach to State politics and the desire of a section to secede from India and get the State acceded to Pakistan. But airing such views, however vehement or persistent, did not in any way endanger public peace; moreover, there were clear signs that the anti-secularist views were gradually losing force.

Significantly, the freedom to rethink had given rise to dissensions among the Muslims and within the Action Committee Sheikh Abdullah and Mirwaiz Farooq were involved in a fierce quarrel whether the Muslims should first aim at Indo-Pak reconciliation or lay stress on peoples right of self determination irrespective of the relations of the two countries. If there was any tension in the Valley it was caused

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solely by the recriminative speeches of the two leaders accusing each other of playing false to the community. True, Abdullah and Farooq had unhappily misdirected the process of rethinking but closer observers could not fail to see that all thoughtful sections among the Kashmiris were in one way or another involved in the rethinking process. Only if the policy of liberalisation had continued for a longer period Kashmir politics could have been reoriented on healthier lines.

The restoration of civil liberties in the Valley and the free expression of views by the Muslims was extremely disliked by the reactionaries and the ultra nationalists. Merely because Kashmir leaders gave vent to feelings critical of India, the Sadiq Government was declared incompetent and unable to deal with the situation; the demand for the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution was stridently revived and the Indian Government advised to dismiss the liberal Government and impose President's rule on the State. Repeatedly Sadiq was asked to curb and gag those who did not agree with the Indian policy on Kashmir or raised the slightest objection to the State's accession to India. Sadiq rightly refused to take any such action though he did warn his adversaries that no disturbance of peace would be tolerated. His approach to the problem was sensible and guided by the universally accepted democratic principles. He would fight ideas with ideas and do his best to defeat the opponents of his policy on political plane; employment of force, he asserted, would defeat its own purpose and so long as he remained in office he would follow this course and none else, the opposition of ultra nationalists notwithstanding.

### *Sadiq Faces Imponderables*

This was indeed heroic and said with a keen appreciation of the historic task ahead. But Sadiq Government had to deal with imponderables. The implications of the liberal policy were not understood even by the rank and file of the Kashmir ruling party. The recurrent discomfiture of the National Conference in State politics since it was formed in 1939

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has been caused by this lack of understanding and long perspective.

Sadiq and his colleagues courageously held the fort of liberalisation and declared that if they had to abandon it, they would prefer to bid good-bye to office. But to be successful this stand needed support of a substantial section of the people; this was not forthcoming. Though enough of goodwill had been gained in all classes, the party men did not rise in stature because the cadres were ill-informed and inadequately equipped with ideas. The Pakistan propaganda to which colour was lent by the anti-Muslim attitude of the Hindu nationalists confused and confounded the Muslim members of the National Conference; they talked parrot-like about the accession, advancing hackneyed arguments which carried little weight. There was no strength of conviction in the assertions of the members and therefore Muslim masses turned a deaf ear to them. In utter disregard of the Muslim reactions, the Hindu members of the National Conference hustled the leaders to take steps which were calculated to annihilate the individuality of Kashmir and wound the susceptibilities of the Kashmiri Muslims. The Hindu colleagues of Sadiq were thus playing in the hands of the Hindu reactionaries.

### *Proposal to End National Conference*

Even during the closing days of Bakshi's rule the Dogra Hindu members of the National Conference had started arguing that since the ideals of the Congress and the Conference were indentical there was no need to maintain a separate organisation in the State. But it was feared that any proposal to dissolve the National Conference might injure the feelings of the Kashmiris who had reared it with their hard labour and life-blood. It was also argued that so long as the State people had certain peculiar cultural and political problems to encounter it may not be advisable to merge the National Conference with the Congress. The demand was not entertained or encouraged. But now the Dogras insisted on it. The Muslim members of the National Conference should have set their face against the move and represented the feelings of the Muslims which were manifestly against it. But

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confused as ever, they meekly connived at it and the top leaders of National Conference for reasons best known to them, accepted the unreasonable Dogra demand. This proved to be a disastrous step for liberalisation policy. For the Hindu reactionaries in Kashmir and outside emboldened by the obvious weakness of the progressive leaders started their fresh onslaughts and challengingly demanded the abrogation of the Article 370.

Now the campaign against the liberalisation policy was intensified and carried into the camp of the Congress outside the State. It has been the old practice and tradition of the Congress to half-heartedly oppose a Hindu communal demand in the beginning, but mostly concede it when the passions are roused. Fiercely opposed to Muslim communalism, on Hindu communal matters a Congressman usually has never had a mind of his own. What Mahasabha or Jan Sangh demands today the Congressmen do so tomorrow. That is what happened about Kashmir. For 17 years the Congress leaders and the Government of India had been consistently opposing the demand for abrogation of Kashmir's autonomy as guaranteed in the Indian Constitution to maintain the spirit of the pact between the Indians and the Kashmiris. It is true small inroads had been made every now and then into it but on the whole the basic autonomy had been allowed to remain unimpaired. The fresh attack of the reactionaries and the ultra nationalists was so concerted and furious that the Government of India consulted wisdom in appeasement.

*Unfortunate Decision*

On 20 November 1964 the Lok Sabha discussed a Bill introduced by an independent member urging that Article 370 of the Constitution be done away with in the interest of complete integration of the State with the rest of the country. The support of the House was full and enthusiastic. There was no opposition to the demand and every member who spoke on the occasion supported it. The Congress members vied with the Jan Sanghis to prove that they did not lag behind in destroying the individuality of the Kashmiris. The only member to qualify his backing was R. K. Khadilkar who, in

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the spirit of Constitution-makers, pointed out that the initiative should come from the Kashmir people and not from the Union Government. This evoked bitter references; nobody was prepared to hear the sane advice for the spirit of the Constitution-makers was nearly dead. However, the voting on the Bill had to be postponed till the next day of the non-official business.

Meanwhile, the campaign against Kashmir's autonomy was stepped up by the opponents. Struck with crippling fear and wanting in moral courage, the leaders of the Indian Government started clearing the decks for the virtual acceptance of the demand.

But legally any change in the Article 370 could not be effected without the recommendation of the Kashmir Constituent Assembly. Since that body had been long dissolved the right reverted to the Kashmiris who had elected it. Taking Sadiq Government to be the representative of the State people, pressure was brought to bear on it to agree to the changes which would satisfy the Indian public opinion. An unpleasant position was created for the Kashmir progressives. They were not oblivious of the current feelings of Kashmir Muslims regarding the merger of the State with India but the discussion in the Lok Sabha had left no uncertainty about the Indian demand. Sadiq saw that ultra nationalism was bent upon having its way ; it was perhaps expedient to give in but the cost was very heavy ; liberalism would receive a severe blow. In moments of weakness Sadiq yielded. After a careful review, including a discussion by the Cabinet, the Union Government decided that it would be imprudent to repeal the article 370 which gives a special status to the State of Jammu and Kashmir, but the reactionary protagonists of the abrogation proposal had to be appeased. With consultations between the Union Government and the State Government it was decided that this aim could be achieved by extending to Kashmir State in successive stages all those articles of the Constitution which did not apply to the State. The Article 370 would be eroded, declared Sadiq.

As a first step in this direction, on 4 December 1964, the Union Home Minister, G. L. Nanda, announced the Govern-

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ment's decision to apply to Kashmir Articles 356 and 357 of the Constitution which set out mechanism to make laws for the State during a breakdown of the Constitutional machinery. Central jurisdiction was also extended to the State in regard to four more items. These included organisation of the High Court, regulation of affairs of trading corporations and price controls. In addition, provisions relating to direct elections of the members of Parliament from the State instead of nomination by the State Government were also made. With the bagful of legal proposals the Hindu communalism was appeased, at any rate for the time being.

Responsible in the last analysis for the maintenance of peace as well as law and order in Kashmir, the Union Government could not perhaps ignore the contingency that might arise by the breakdown of the constitutional machinery at any time and the need for the President to temporarily administer the State. But the time at and the manner in which the step of applying the Articles was taken created unfortunate impressions: first, that Hindu communalism was not powerless in India and could have its way ; and, second, that Sadiq Government was weak and unstable in the eyes of the central leaders and unable to deliver the goods.

*Beginning of the End of Autonomy*

While making the important pronouncement, the Home Minister assured the Parliamentarians that the Government shared their concern and sense of urgency for fuller integration of Kashmir. His ingenious argument was that Article 370 was not a wall ; "It was a tunnel. A good deal of traffic had already passed, more will pass now." A few days later the Union Education Minister, M. C. Chagla, made the intention clearer. Speaking at Jammu, he observed that through Article 370 the whole of the Indian Constitution could be applied to Jammu and Kashmir. In his opinion, Chagla stressed, the separate Constitution of Kashmir should be scrapped and the Indian Constitution applied in its entirety to the State.

Encouraged by these statements, the Hindu reactionaries refused to be appeased by the measures adopted and insisted on the repeal of the entire controversial Article. The

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Jammu Jan Sangh (old Praja Parishad) declared that the Dogras will not rest till this aim is achieved. On December 27, the All India Hindu Mahasabha put forward a demand for promulgation of the President's rule in the Jammu and Kashmir State in view of the evil designs of China and Pakistan. On January 20, Akhil Bhartiya Jan Sangh too joined the chorus.

Some of the measures proposed to be applied to Jammu and Kashmir by Home Minister should have been welcome to the Kashmiris because they were manifestly democratic; such for instance was the one meant to get the members from Kashmir for Parliament elected and not nominated by State Government as heretofore. But the manner in which the steps were taken and the context in which the Articles were applied to the State added to the fears and suspicions of the State Muslims regarding their future as citizens of India. It is amazing that neither the Government of India nor the State Government took the reaction of the State people into consideration. Their sole desire was to appease the Indian public opinion. This is all the more to be regretted because it cut short the process of rethinking on the part of State Muslims which had undoubtedly started with the liberalisation of the administration.

*Fears and Suspicions*

The Muslims all over the Valley entertain innumerable fears and suspicions about their future if they continue to remain with India. Many of these are no doubt imaginary born of the tirades incessantly carried on by Pakistan and Azad Kashmir Radios against India. But some of the apprehensions are not entirely groundless and have to be removed by the leaders if the aim is the emotional integration of the State with India. The image of India projected into the minds of the Kashmiris through the rulers' misdeeds during the past years is ugly. That in itself is sufficient to scare away the Kashmiris. The communal riots in many towns of India, particularly at Jabalpur, Rourkela, Jamshedpur and Culcutta in which Muslims were killed, looted or made homeless have only increased the fears. The difficulties that the Muslims are experiencing in getting jobs in different States outside Kashmir, in central civil services or in recruitment to armed forces have further strengthened them.

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It is well to remember that neither Kashmiri Pandits nor Dogra Hindus have to encounter any such difficulties. Inadequate representation of Kashmiri Muslims in Central Government departments is not an unreal grievance. Declaration of Hindi as national language of India is equally irksome, if not more, to the Kashmiri Muslims as it is to Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. What mentally upsets the Kashmiris is the provocative and irresponsible speeches frequently indulged in by leaders of Jan Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha which are occasionally supported by some Congress leaders indirectly suggesting policies to crush the brave spirit of patriotic Valley Muslims or hold them down by force.

Not very long ago Kashmir was ruled by non-Kashmiris ; the entire administrative machinery was manned by outsiders. In the twenties, under pressure of public opinion the Maharaja was compelled to enact a law debarring outsiders from being employed on government jobs or from purchasing any land in the State. Though the law was amended in Bakshi's days, its basic principle still holds good. There are insistent demands that this law should be abrogated and non-Kashmiris enabled to freely purchase land in Kashmir. From time to time wicked suggestions are made by some individuals and political groups that the Hindu refugees from Pakistan should be settled in Kashmir to lower the ratio of local Muslim population. So far such ideas have been deprecated in responsible quarters. But Kashmiris link these suggestions with the demand for abrogation of autonomy and draw their own inferences. They are distressed to think that after becoming a permanent part of Indian society their very existence in the State may be in jeopardy.

### *Farce of Free Elections*

The Kashmiris feel deeply aggrieved on another score also : they have been disabled after independence to elect their true representatives to the Legislative Assembly. While in all other parts of India elections to the State legislatures and the Parliament are known to be free and fair, in Kashmir the voters have been deprived of the most important political and constitutional right of choosing their rulers. As is now generally

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admitted the previous three general elections were rigged and not a single member from the Valley was elected to the Legislative Assembly or the two houses of the Indian Parliament who would genuinely reflect the opinions, desires, urges and grievances of the Kashmiris.

On all the three occasions the Government machinery was completely and unhesitatingly used in support of the ruling party; opponents were disqualified on flimsy and frivolous grounds; the few dauntless candidates who dared to stand for the contest were mercilessly beaten or kidnapped; Peace Brigade men were employed to intimidate voters; and when even strong arm methods failed, the ballot boxes were tampered with enabling polling officers to declare the victory of the National Conference party men.

Through such malpractices the ruling party succeeded in capturing uncontested cent per cent seats in 1951, 41 out of 45 in 1957, and 40 out of 45 in 1962 general elections to the State Legislature in the Kashmir Valley. Unopposed returns on such large scale did not take place anywhere in the rest of the Indian Union.

With some justification Sadiq Government claimed that the conditions had changed in 1967 when general elections were held a third time under the Constitution. Unlike the previous occasions there was little evidence of the ruling party indulging in hooliganism to terrorise the opponents; as many as seven political parties joined the election fight and no fewer than 450 persons filed nomination papers in the whole State to contest seats for the Lok Sabha and the State Legislature. Significantly, among the independent candidates were a few members of the Plebiscite Front, the pro-Abdullah organisation, which had officially boycotted the elections.

While undoubtedly this indicated a definite improvement in the political climate, conditions were still far from being such as to ensure free and fair elections. As is known over one hundred prominent workers and leaders of the opposition parties including Sheikh Abdullah, Mirwaiz Farooq, M.A. Beg, Mohiuddin Kara and Mohammed Syed Masoodi were held in detention and denied liberty to participate in the elections. Charges of

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official interference were frequently made by opponents and critics. Under the caption "Free & Fair ?", *Kashmir Times* wrote :

> The Congress candidates during their election tours are accompanied by Government officials who are given on the spot "orders" by them. The Information Department and Field Survey Organisation are openly working for the ruling party preparing and publishing propaganda materials, editing ruling party newspapers and alternatively coercing the members of the fourth estate. The use of official cars by the ministers. IAF helicopter by the Congress Election Chief for the election purpose and the deployment of the officials like PAs and security officers of ministers for election work are the clear cases of misuse of official machinery and resources. The imposition of section 144 in parts of the Valley during the electioneering makes the claims of "free and fair elections" look ridiculous.[1]

Colour was lent to these charges when out of 226 nominations filed in the Valley 118 were rejected by the returning officers on flimsy technical grounds enabling 21 ruling party nominees to be elected without contest. Again, in the rest of the country barely ten candidates were returned unopposed to 3421 seats in State legislatures. While the axe fell on most of the prominent candidates of the opposition parties in the Valley not one Congress leader was disqualified. The *Hindustan Times* pertinently commented : "There is no answer to the question why all the rejections should have been on the side of the opposition and why all the benefits should have gone to the ruling party."[2]

At the mass rejection of the nomination papers the opposition leaders made strong protests. A delegation consisting of the representatives of Jan Sangh, National Conference and PSP met Prime Minister Indira Gandhi at New Delhi on 29 January and demanded the dismissal of Sadiq Government, imposition of President's rule on the State during the election period and fresh scrutiny of the rejected nomination papers by an impartial authority. These demands were summarily turned down.

The matter was brought to the notice of the Chief Election Commissioner, K. V. K. Sundaram, who paid a hurried visit

[1] The *Kashmir Times*, Jammu, dated 21 January 1967

[2] The *Hindustan Times* New Delhi, dated 3 February 1967,

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to the Valley on 31st January, made enquiries on the spot, conceded that the complaints were of a serious nature but pleaded helplessness in rectifying the situation. Before leaving the Valley on 1st February, Sundaram issued a statement declaring that "he was by and large satisfied with the orders passed by the returning officers"[3] thus condoning the rejections and deepening the impression in the public mind that the State people were doomed to have an unrepresentative government under the present dispensation.

The Kashmiris know that the Election Commissioner is fully empowered to make elections free and fair but they bitterly complain that inside the Valley he functions in a manner as to appear helpless in checking malpractices or bringing under control the fraudulent manipulations of the ruling party.

### *No Enquiries into Firing Incidents*

And this is not all. From time to time political disturbances take place in different parts of the Indian Union, and, at times, the police resort to firing causing death of citizens. On such occasions usually a judicial probe or magisterial enquiry is ordered to ascertain if the police was within lawful limits to use firearms. In Kashmir Valley during the past nineteen years many political disturbances have taken place and hundreds of people done to death by armed police but not even once did the Government order any judicial enquiry into the conduct of the guardians of law and order. If the Kashmiris feel mortified at the double standard of political justice differentiating the two peoples living in the Valley and outside, is there anything to be wondered at ?

### *Cause of Secularism Harmed*

Considering these facts, it is clear that the application of Articles 356 and 357 of the Indian Constitution to Kashmir was untimely, imprudent and inadvisable. It has strengthened the belief in Kashmir that Indian secularism is skindeep, that Sadiq Government has proved spineless and that India distrusts

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[3]See reports of press interviews and statements given by K. V. K. Sundaram published in *Hindustan Times*. dated 1, 2 & 3 February 1967.

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the State Muslims and wants to hold them down by force. The step has undone much of the good work that Sadiq had done especially in the realm of ideas by inducing the Muslims to rethink about the accession dispute ; it has dashed to ground the new rising hopes of democrats and progressives. Worst of all, it has reinforced the waning influence of the extremist and pro-Pakistan sections among the Muslims in the Valley. Sri Jaya Prakash Narayan justly pointed out that there was "no creditable proof yet that the people of the Valley freely accepted the legal fact of accession, and in the absence of emotional integration a constitutional step had little meaning." He rightly stressed that these steps regarding Kashmir would harm india's cause of secularism, democracy, justice and peace. It was no angry remark when J. P. warned that it would also symbolise the "enthronement of aggressive Hindu communalism and that communalism is bound in end to turn upon the Hindu community itself and destroy it."[4]

*A Second Blunder*

At the request of Kashmiri leaders, the Durgapur Session of the Indian National Congress amended, on 10th January 1965 Party Constitution to provide for extension of the Congress activities to Jammu and Kashmir. It was decided that in future a branch of the Congress would function in place of the National Conference. G.M. Sadiq and Mir Qasim, general secretary of the National Conference, besides a number of Kashmiri leaders, were present at Durgapur at the time to welcome the decision. In view of the claim that after the liberalisation of the administration and ousting of the Bakshi group from it the National Conference was again becoming increasingly popular among the Kashmiris, the reasons which led to this move were obscure. But coming soon after the constitutional changes it harmed rather than helped the ruling party. If the Kashmiris believed that the National Conference leaders had lost the game and were as a last resort trying to exploit the name of the Congress to regain public confidence they were not to blame. For, even the pro-Congress *Hindustan Times* commented:

[4] In a Press statement issued on 18th Decembar 1964 from Calcutta.

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> To refurbish its image in the eyes of the people of Kashmir, after all the damage has been done to it (ruling party) during the years of the Bakshi regime, will not be so easy. Yet the party will stand or fall by that test. No amount of blood transfusion from the Congress will help it to regain the popular support it commanded during the struggle for freedom and in the first years of power unless the party develops demonstrably high standards of integrity, public service, and fair play.[5]

Like the constitutional changes, the dissolution of National Conference was a blunder; it defeated the purpose for which it was professedly made. National Conference enjoyed glorious local traditions, a name and a past which evoked sentiments of patriotism, sacrifice and self-respect in the Kashmiris which Congress might not be able to do. For over thirty-two years the State people had reared this organisation with hard toil and great sacrifice. For Kashmiri Muslims it had a special attraction; it was a symbol of their political achievements, cultural advance and national existence. There is no distinguished Kashmiri leader to whatever political ideology he subscribes today, who did not at one time or another belong to it. Even those who parted company with the Conference for one reason or another retained affection for it.

It was therefore improper for Sadiq and his colleagues to become grave-diggers, bury the Conference and write its epitaph. Instead of bringing Kashmiris nearer to India this unwarranted act helped to augment hostility and rancour thus making integration of the State with India all the more difficult.[6]

### *Nomenclature Changed*

Sometime later the State Legislature adopted a Bill amending the State Constitution rechristening the Sadar-i-Riyasat as Governor and the State Prime Minister as Chief Minister thus bringing Kashmir in this respect in line with other States of the Union. Again the move was untimely; it did not in any way materially strengthen the ruling party but only helped to retard the process of emotional integration by increasing Muslim resentment.

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[5] *Hindustan Times* dated 21st January 1965

[6] In June 1966, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed exhumed the corpse of the National Conference, convened a party gathering in its name, hoping to use it for achievement of his personal ends and capture of power.

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Evidently the Indian leaders were impatient to accelerate the constitutional integration come what may and seemed to be prepared to meet all the eventualities that it might create.

*Attempts to Rehabilitate Bakshi*

While application of Articles 356 and 357 to Kashmir and replacement of National Conference by Congress were in process, a significant development was taking place simultaneously. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed who had been arrested on 22nd September 1964 on charges of corruption and other offences of criminal nature was suddenly released on 13th December on grounds of health. During the trying days of Relic Restoration Movement, Indian Press was full of reports revealing how Bakshi and his supporters had through corruption and strong arm methods butchered democracy, antagonised the State people and created revulsion against India in the hearts of the Kashmiri Muslims. Therefore when the Sadiq Government announced that they intended to institute a commission of inquiry to try the former premier, it was welcomed in the State and outside. But as we saw, the Sadiq Government did not come up to the expectations of the reactionaries and the Hindu communalists because the liberalisation policy allowed the Kashmiri Muslims to enjoy freedom of expression. What the reactionaries wanted was greater suppression of the Kashmiris and annihilation of their freedom spirit. This Sadiq Government refused to do, at any rate in the beginning. So when during Bakshi's days of imprisonment his propagandists went about denouncing Sadiq's liberalism and telling the Indians that harsh rule alone could save Kashmir for India they were heard with sympathy and given words of encouragement. Perhaps some smaller men in the Union Cabinet too did not remain unaffected by this antiliberal propaganda.

After release, Bakshi came to Delhi ostensibly for treatment. Here he was showered with meaningful affection, regard and honour which was heartening to the supporters of the ousted regime.

On the one hand allowing and assisting the Kashmir Government to set up a high commission to probe into charges of curruption and other criminal misdeeds of Bakshi,

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and, on the other, to display such extraordinary regard for the accused might seem madness but it was a madness with a method. The Indian leaders were trying to rehabilitate the fallen politician-administrator with a purpose; they seem to think that if the liberal government fails to fully integrate the State with India by force the ruthless and unscrupulous Bakshi might still be needed to handle the situation.

*India Loses More Ground*

Whatever the Congress leaders thought these happenings did not benefit India or advance the cause of integration in any way ; they surely gave a setback to the liberalisation of administration and made the task of Sadiq Government immensely hard. If these have helped any one it is the force which is working against India and is opposed to secularism and democracy.

Indian leaders have been expecting an impossible development to take place in Kashmir. They want to see a Muslim leader at the helm of affairs in the State who would be pliable and function according to the wishes of Indian Nationalism disregarding the sentiments and aspirations of the Kashmiris; at the same time, the Indians vainly hope that such a leader would remain popular with his own people. Attempts made in the past to have a leader with this super human qualification have failed. If Abdullah and Bakshi did not succeed in their endeavour to convert public opinion in Kashmir one of the reasons should be sought in this unreasonable craving of the Indian leadership. In Kashmir only that leader has a chance to survive opposition onslaughts and lead the State people to the goal of democracy as an integral part of the Indian Nation who will, during the transition period, wisely strike a balance between the aspirations and emotions of the Indians and the urges and sentiments of the Kashmiris. It is futile to believe that the aims, inclinations, passions and desires of the two peoples are identical in every respect today.

*Ever Increasing Armed Personnel*

When Sheikh Abdullah and his colleagues invited the Indian Army in October 1947 to defend State borders against

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aggression of tribesmen from Pakistan, it was believed that only a small number of Indian soldiers would be required to do the job on the Kashmir soil and none would be needed to assist the civil administration to maintain peace. But with the worsening of the political situation the number of army men increased year after year who did not remain confined to the border. Sometime later, Central Reserve Police was called in which was followed by squadrons of Punjab Armed Police (PAP), Bihar Armed Police (BAP) and Madhya Pradesh Armed Police (MPAP). An armed section of the Kashmir police also was raised and reinforced; the civil police was quadrupled. As already stated the National Militia and the Special Police Unit had been brought into existence at the commencement of the National Conference rule. In 1965, a force of ten thousand men called Home Guards was recruited.

Wherever you go in the Valley, the non-Kashmiri armed police is conspicuous by its presence on both sides of the bridges, post, telegraph and telephone offices and at the gates of many other public establishments; local policmen are seldom seen at any place of importance. The estates constructed for industrial development in the Valley are occupied by these non-Kashmiri armed personnel. It is derogatory to the national pride of a Kashmiri and a source of mortification to a patriot to see his homeland present the appearance of a police state. Perhaps under the prevailing conditions the rulers cannot help it but to achieve Kashmir's emotional integration with India a political climate has to be generated where the need for these outside armed forces will disappear, at any rate for striking terror in the heart of local population.

### *Good Work Undone*

After a long period of seventeen years a new chapter opened with the rise to power of the progressive group in the National Conference. Sadiq and his band had to work under many handicaps: they had themselves been a part of the machinery of persecution and corruption since 1947 and therefore not above criticism; the legislature was totally unrepresentative, the party apparatus lying in shambles, and the personnel of the administration had been widely if not wholly corrupted. It was heroic to assume office and run the Govern-

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ment conscientiously. But Sadiq had the sagacity to follow the policy which would lead to the integration of the State with India as envisaged by the Constitution-makers.

Liberalisation got a start, the sharp edge of the opposition's ferocity was blunted; things began to wear a happy appearancc. Undeniably the policy of liberalisation afforded opponents of India the opportunity to express their views freely. But there was no need to get nervous over it; for in the long run liberalisation was bound to advance the cause of integration; ventilated grievences do not cause much harm but if they remain sunken in the hearts they become dangerous. Such arguments, however, cut little ice with the reactionaries ; they raised hue and cry charging the Sadiq Government for having given a long rope to anti-Indian and pro-Pakistan elements. Vigorous propaganda was set afoot that Kashmir had reached the brink of a precipice and that it could be saved only by abrogation of Article 370 and imposition of the President's rule.

*Remedy Worse than Disease*

The advocates of this anti-democratic policy do not seem to have given a moment's thought to the consequences that are bound to follow if their will be done. The President's rule cannot be a permanent arrangement to run any State; it can be resorted to only in case of grave emergency to restore normal working of the Constitution. In other States of India where no party or class of people think of secession it is quite helpful as a stop-gap measure. But in Kashmir it can aggravate the disease in body politic. If President's rule is imposed merely because the Muslims are opposed to accession and are at heart hostile to India, this is no remedy. Constitutionally, the President can rule only for six months in the first instance and may extend the period to the maximum of three years after which he shall have to order general elections in the State. President's rule is not going to mollify the Kashmiris or persuade them to change their views. In the general elections after three years of Presidential rule there will not be a ghost of a chance for any pro-Indian candidate to get elected, at any rate among the Muslims. With the majority of the seats

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captured by the anti-Indian groups, India will have a crisis of first magnitude at hand. The propaganda of the Hindu reactionaries and communalists is inevitably driving the country to that end.

*Progressives Go Astray*

Force of circumstances and desire to gain support of Indian extremists impelled Sadiq Government to make one compromise after another with its cherished principles and declared policies[7]. A number of opportunist legislators and corrupt officials wormed their way into the affections of the cabinet ministers. In the matter of appointments to public services the practice of jobbery was restarted by the end of 1964.

The admissions to the technical colleges in 1966 were made under conditions causing much heart burning. Over 150 students of the State Medical College made a writ petition to the High Court challenging the fairness of the Selection Committee and the procedure in making the admission. The High Court quashed admission of 11 favourites of the authorities who had yet to attain the age of 17 years as required by college prospectus as well as the University Statute. Their lordships' trenchent comment while passing the judgement was: "The selection appears to us to be completely arbitrary, unfair and clearly violative of Articles 14 and 29 of the Constitution and does not pass tests laid down by the Supreme Court".[8]

In other respects too Sadiq Government failed to maintain the high standard of administrative morality and laid itself open to serious charges of the opponents. In November 1966, fourteen members of the Jammu and Kashmir legislature submitted a memorandum to President Dr. Radhakrishnan listing specific allegations of corruption, nepotism and "misuse of official power" against Sadiq and his more important colleagues.[9]

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7. This is clear from the correspondence that passed between the author and G. M. Sadiq which is published as Appendix C.

8. *The Hindustan Times* dated 8th December 1966.

9. The 84-Page memorandum was contained in a booklet copies of which were widely circulated among the members of Parliament, the Press and the general public.

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The signatories to the memorandum were one and all no doubt supporters of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and the main purpose of the move was vilification of the Sadiq Government thereby to minimize the grave effects produced on public mind by the publication of proceedings of Ayyengar Commission. But some of the specific charges in the memorandum were substantiated by documentary evidence, mostly copies and correspondence from the files of State Government, as to create some misgivings.

These were small but ominous portents that distressed democrats for the danger was not very remote that the Sadiq Government would gradually go on the same path which was followed by its predecessors with the inevitable consequences.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

# INDO-PAKISTAN ARMED CLASH

In summer 1964 after the assumption of power by the progressive group under the leadership of G. M. Sadiq, the prospects of Kashmir seceding from India had diminished.

It was delightful to hear some pro-Pakistan workers of the opposition parties ruefully admitting that the sharp edge of their denunciatory criticism of Sadiq Government had been blunted and their appeal to Muslims had lost much of its force. The truth of these remarks was evidenced by the small number of people who attended the Plebiscite Front convention at Sopor in early November. In dismay, Sheikh Abdullah many a time after the convention expressed in private that he would prefer to retire from politics rather than rely on a fickle following.

But this hopeful climate was soon marred by the imprudent and short-sighted measures initiated at New Delhi. The campaign for abolition of Article 370 and the conversion of National Conference into a local branch of India National Congress had terrific impact on the minds of the Kashmiri Muslims. In March 1965 they were mentally and spiritually further removed from India ; the good work done by the Sadiq

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Government through liberalisation of administration and democratisation of politics was almost undone.

*Call For Social Boycott*

Finding that the tide had turned and the chance ripened for an onslaught on the Kashmir Government, Sheikh Abdullah who was biding his time, gave a call to his impatient followers for *Tarqi Mawalat* (social boycott) of the State Muslims who had joined the "Hindu" Congress. It unleashed forces of disorder, lawlessness and hooliganism. The Government was left with no alternative but to arrest over 200 prominent workers of the opposition, ban public meetings and processions in the Valley and suspend publication of a dozen journals strongly opposed to the regime; a severe blow was dealt at the policy of liberalisation; it virtually came to an end.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Abdullah left India on an extensive tour abroad. He made statements on Kashmir politics partly truthful but mostly misguiding which concealed his own sins of omission and commission. He presented India as the evil intentioned power which denied to the Kashmiris the universally recognised right of self-determination. Considering his activities harmful and anti-national, the Indian Government impounded the Sheikh's passport and, on retun, he was detained first at Ootacamund and later on at Kodai Kanal far away from his home. This added fuel to the fire of resentment burning in the hearts of his numerous followers.

The Government and leaders of Pakistan were carefully taking note of these developments. While in 1964 after the assumption of power by Sadiq, the Pakistanis were bewildered and disheartened to find that their chances of acquiring Kashmir were becoming dimmer, it gladdened their hearts to witness the growing political turmoil which, they surmised, provided them with the long awaited opportunity. Now or never was the slogan. Nothing would keep them back, not even the settlement on Kutch dispute.

For a clear understanding and realistic appraisal of the Kashmir situation, it is necessary to recognize the fact that by and large State Muslims are not very friendly towards India;

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an overwhelming majority of them are not happy under the present political setup; they desire to have done with it. But they are reluctant to bring about any big change through communal warfare or bloodshed; they detest any method of violence to achieve the purpose; it is against their nature and tradition. Therefore the reports published from time to time that Pakistan was contemplating sending guerilla forces into the State was looked upon with disapproval by the thoughtful sections among the Muslims who wanted to peacefully struggle for their right of self-determination.

Time and again, several leaders of the Action Committee, notably Mohammed Syed Masoodi and Ghulam Mohiuddin Kara, warned their followers against violence in any form and stressed the imperative need of conducting the movement in a peaceful and dignified manner. Both did wonderful work in pacifying the excited Muslim crowds during the critical days of Holy Relic Restoration Movement when a small mistake could have soaked the Valley with a stream of blood. But for Masoodi the identification of restored holy relic would have been well-neigh impossible and involved the Indian authorities in a tremendous difficulty. Kara's speeches characterised by balance and caution, produced a moderating influence on the movement and kept agitated mobs under control. In one of the mass meetings at Zadibal he did not hesitate to advise the Kashmiris that while denouncing Hindu communalism in India they should not overlook the atrocities of Muslim fanatics in East Pakistan. For saying this he incurred the wrath of the extremist sections among the Kashmiris but he saw no reason to retract. However, in response to the growing demand of restive supporters, in June 1965, a non-violent satyagraha was started by the Action Committee leaders and small jathas of trained volunteers offered themselves for arrest. The satyagrahis mainly demanded right of self-determination to settle the accession dispute and release of all political prisoners including *Sheikh Abdullah*. The satyagraha continued smoothly till the armed Pakistanis appeared on the scene.

It was no secret that Pakistan had been training young men for past three years at different military camps to fight

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like guerillas in the mountainous recesses and foothills of Jammu and Kashmir. Even in 1964 these forces were ready and fully equipped for action. Only the Pakistan leaders did not find the time opportune then. Early in 1965 they thought the rare opportunity had arrived. After a good deal of deliberation August 9, 1965, was chosen for launching the adventure because the Action Committee had decided to make a huge demonstration against the Government on this day by holding complete hartal in the Valley, by defying the ban on public meetings in the shape of offering jathas for arrest at seven different places (four in the city and three in the muffasil towns) and by holding public meetings in the mosques demanding right of self-determination for the people, removal of restriction on free movement of Sheikh Abdullah and release of all political prisoners.

Because the Kashmiris were not enamoured of the guerilla warfare, it would seem the Pakistan authorities considered it futile to attempt enlisting the support of opposition leaders in the Valley. The adventure was to be launched in spite of them. There are convincing proofs that none of the leaders was even consulted or apprised of the plan.

*Infiltration from Pakistan*

At about the same time when armed men started crossing the cease-fire line a huge poster appeared in Srinagar denouncing the moderation and sobriety of the Action Committee leaders who pinned faith on satyagraha and advocated secularism and non-violence for the achievement of the goal. Its authorship was attributed to the workers of the Plebiscite Front who hotly repudiated the charge. Later on it was revealed that the poster had been prepared and printed in Pakistan and was designed to defame the moderates and egg on the extremists to participate in the planned violent upheaval.

The invasion took almost all opposition leaders by surprise ; some of the top ranking ones who were leading the satyagraha with a fair measure of success considered that the Pakistan invasion was a bolt from the blue because it upset their own plans of organising what they conceived would be a democratic, peaceful revolt in the Valley. In the speeches which

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the opposition leaders made at a public meeting in the evening on 9th August they advised the Kashmiris "to be peaceful and responsible keeping their mouths shut". A few days later the satyagraha was indefinitely suspended in view of the grave situation that had arisen in the country.

Nevertheless, Pakistan had acted with sufficient circumspection and forethought. The infiltrators started their trek by the end of July. It was planned that at least three thousand armed men should reach Srinagar on the eve of 9th August ; they depended on the fullest co-operation of the common Muslims, if not the leaders, throughout their journey; the arrival in the capital was to be kept a well guarded secret. Then on 9th August when the people would be observing hartal and satyagrahi jathas offering themselves for arrest, the armed men would come out bombarding State buildings, killing Congressmen and capturing such strategic places as the radio station, the secretariat, telegraph office, telephone exchange and the aerodrome. If the Pakistan leaders were disappointed and invaders failed in gaining the objective, it cannot be attributed to inefficiency or faulty organisation.

That a large number of infiltrators could successfully avoid detection by Indian Military Intelligence not only when crossing the cease-fire line but also throughout the long trek until they spread over large parts of the Valley and reached the gates of Srinagar, testifies to the resourcefulness of the invaders and calls for a censure of the directors of Indian Intelligence. When Defence Minister Chavan was assuring the Indians at his departure from Kashmir in early August that after the agreement over disputed Rann of Kutch, the borders between India and Pakistan had cooled down, probably batches of armed Pakistanis were many miles inside the Indian territory quietly and unnoticed moving towards the capital.

However, in one respect the invaders and their masters had gravely miscalculated : they had taken for granted the fullest co-operation of the local Muslims. This was not forthcoming, at any rate on the expected huge scale. While the Indian Military Intelligence was slumbering, some local Muslims in far flung Badgam tehsil became suspicious seeing the un-

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identifiable bands of armed men non-challantly marching across the villages.

It was then that the alarm was sounded on 6th August and the Indian security forces alerted, three days before the ill-fated plan of armed insurrection in the city. What happened subsequently is common knowledge and need not be recapitulated here.

*Failure of Invasion*

That the invaders commanded some local support from religious minded zealots and mullas all along the route should not surprise anybody; that many Kashmiris were terror-stricken and forced under duress to give shelter to infiltrators is also true. But what is no less heartening than astonishing is the fact that, despite pro-Pakistan proclivities of the Muslims, the invaders failed to get massive support anywhere during their forward march. In Srinagar and other towns, the attitude of the people was displayed by the disciplined and orderly manner in which they pursued their avocations after the peaceful demonstrations of the 9th August. No outsider observing the normalcy could believe that a battle was being fought on the outskirts of the city. On 10th August guns boomed and there was exchange of heavy fire whole night keeping the entire city population awake. Amazingly, the next morning markets were crowded as usual, the offices, factories and educational institutions remained open with full attendance; even the girls did not hesitate to attend the schools and colleges as before; there was not a trace of communal bitterness. This enigmatic behaviour of the Kashmiris, resentful against India yet reluctant to fraternize with the infiltrators from Pakistan, puzzled the Indians; it caused disillusionment among the infiltrators who had been taught to expect a warm welcome and a widespread uprising in the State on their arrival.

But to political analysts who have closely studied contemporary Kashmir affairs in the context of the State's cultural and historical past there was nothing surprising in the manner in which the Kashmiris faced the situation.

To have an accurate estimate of the number of armed guerillas who entered the State is very difficult; the numbers

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given by different persons and agencies were mere guesses. But this much was certain that among the thousands who crossed the cease-fire line there were no Kashmiris ; the armed groups were solely composed of either Pakistani nationals or others who belonged to non-Kashmiri speaking Azad Kashmir terrritories.

The declaration of the Pakistan Government persistently upheld till the last, that the armed men were local people in revolt and not the infiltrators from across the border, was disbelieved. Even pro-Pakistan sections in the Valley considered the Pakistan denial a need to meet international complications. But no Kashmiri entertained any doubt that the infiltrators were non-Kashmiris and the invasion was organised and directed by Pakistan Government.

It seems that the Kashmir Valley refugees living across the cease-fire line either refused to be recruited or the Pakistan leaders did not have confidence in them in view of the inimical attitude of the large bulk of Muslims living in the Valley towards the invasion. But a number of infiltrators was dressed like Kashmiris and some of them had even learnt to speak the language but with accent that easily betrayed them.

To one who has never seen the vast and dense Kashmir forests and the difficult mountainous terrain, it is not easy to imagine the innumerable difficulties in combing the entire area which had to be undertaken to deal with the last infiltrator. The Indian armies had to accomplish this arduous task.

*Political Repercussions*

Equally, if not more, important with the mopping up of the invaders or their liquidation, was the political problem that the new development had posed. While the Kashmiris displayed unexpected aplomb and courage in face of the grave danger the ultra nationalists and the reactionary Hindus became panicky. Pressure was brought to bear upon the Sadiq Government that all those who were suspected of leanings towards Pakistan or did not agree with the view that Kashmir's accession to India is final should be arrested and severely dealt with; the target of attack especially was the leaders of the opposition Action Committee. Because it was not within the realm of possibility to keep in custody large sections of Muslim popula-

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tion the Sadiq Government failed to oblige the ultra nationalists but when the armed clash accentuated bitter feelings all the prominent workers of the Action Committee, including Masoodi, Farooq and Kara, were arrested and put behind the prison bars.

A disconcerting aspect of the situation was the treatment of the Muslims while mopping up operations were being vigorously conducted in the State. The treacherous enemy sometimes disguised as the Kashmiri was difficult to identify especially by the Indian security forces. Only a Kashmiri could distinguish and differentiate a Kashmiri from a non-Kashmiri. Thus in the affected areas many innocent and even pro-India Kashmiris had to suffer hardships, injury, and even loss of property and life, because they were suspected to be infiltrators.

There was a pernicious tendency among the Hindus to believe that every Kashmiri Muslim was ready to harbour infiltrators. Many houses of innocent people in the affected areas were searched on frivolous reports of mischievous people, the inmates harassed and the neighbours terrified only to find that the reports in most cases were entirely unfounded· But in the meantime mischief had been done and the people antagonised.

### *The Armed Clash*

As could be easily foreseen the armed infiltration quickly led to open war between India and Pakistan which did not remain confined, as in 1947, to Kashmir; the hostilities spread to all parts of the subcontinent both in the west and the east on the borders. For twenty-two days the armies of the two countries fought on the land, in the air and on the high seas with all the modern weapons that were available to them.

We do not propose to narrate the grim story of the war; it is beyond the scope of this book and space fabids to even give a brief description. But we may mention that over a lakh Hindus were forced to flee from Chhamb-Jaurian area in Jammu province when the Pakistan Army occupied it and about seventy-five thousand Muslims had to leave their ancestral homes in Poonch-Rajouri district and cross into Azad Kashmir partly due to the disturbances and partly also

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because they were harassed by the over-enthusiastic, ultra nationalist Hindus who grasped the opportunity to fulfil their dream of kicking out the Muslims and thus decreasing their ratio in the State population.

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

# THE SENSELESS WAR AND ITS LESSONS

To the relief and joy of 600 million people living in the subcontinent the shooting war between India and Pakistan came to a close and a cease-fire was ordered by the two governments in compliance with the resolution of the U.N. Security Council adopted by that body on 20 September 1965.

Since the armed conflict had the potentiality of leading to a bigger conflagration involving Asia as a whole or may be even the world, its termination was welcomed by all the nations with the solitary exception of Communist China which aimed at emerging the most powerful nation at the exhaustion of the two belligerents in a prolonged war.

Even during the brief period of 22-days clash enormous destruction had been wrought in India and Pakistan ; thousands dead or injured including soldiers and civilians ; crores of worth armaments and property destroyed. Besides, nearly two hundred thousand innocent people including old men, women and children driven out of their homes were rendered destitute, roofless and miserable practically thrown on the streets ; only a month earlier they were living happy, peaceful and contented lives in their ancestral abodes.

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*Death and Devastation*

War anywhere, at any time and for any cause provokes baser nature of the belligerents; India and Pakistan could be no exceptions. National chauvinism was given full play in both the countries. Fighting jawans on either side were extolled by their respective leaders for valour and heroism on the battlefield; death and devastation in the enemy camp were callously, though gleefully, hailed; people were praised for the unity, discipline and unexampled spirit of self sacrifice in their own countries. At the same time, both sides depicted the enemy in disarray and constant panic almost on the verge of collapse; real or imaginary weaknesses in every department of life of the enemy were frequently publicised by leaders to sustain the failing spirit of their own people. Consequently, while on the one hand the Indians and the Pakistanis imbibed false notions about their own righteousness and strength, on the other, old prejudices, hatreds and the unedifying desire of taking revenge from those across the border was revived in their minds. This could by no means generate the atmosphere in which the two countries could come closer to each other or an everlasting peace could be established between them.

The U. N. Security Council adopted three resolutions on 4th, 6th and 20th of September over the Indo-Pokistan conflict. In accordance with the last of these which was unconditionally accepted by the two governments, the armed personnel of both were to be withdrawn to the positions held by them before 5th August 1965 after the cease-fire had become effective. It was obvious that apart from appeasing the vanity of the politicians there was no sense in starting the hostilities, marching armies across the border and conducting a full scale war.

Be that as it may, even a senseless war has some lessons for those who seek to learn from experience.

*War Mongers at Work*

Partly due to historical reasons but mostly as an outcome of the tragic happenings before and after partition of the sub-continent there exists an amount of ill will towards each other

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in the two parts; nevertheless, it is also true that the overwhelming majority of the people in India and Pakistan want to bury the hatchet, forget the past and live in peace; so do many public men, politicians and leaders. But there are certain well-known extremist parties and individuals in both the countries who are revengeful and always on the lookout for some pretext with which they could excite the deep-rooted prejudices and explosive passions of their peace-loving but ignorant countrymen and provoke them to remain prepared for a fight with the neighbouring country. Peace does not suit their book. Therefore, they have been at pains to get their country embroiled in some sort of conflict; the Kashmir issue comes handy to such militant elements on either side of the border. From the day of independence in 1947 the firebrands in the two countries have advocated war to settle the tough problem of Kashmir's future and after eighteen years hard and persistent labour they were successful in the achievement of this unworthy aim.

Students of world history know that a war creates more problems than it may settle. Knowing how complicated and complex the Kashmir dispute is, responsible diplomats and statesmen everywhere have consistently stressed that it can be ended through patient negotiations without raising passions or creating bad blood between the two States. Unfortunately the views of the Indian and Pakistan Governments became so rigid and inflexible regarding Kashmir that there appeared no common ground between the two to enable them to take up the issue at the conference table and arrive at an understanding. Nevertheless, there was no other alternative but to wait for a better time when moods would chasten and tempers cool down. It will serve no useful purpose to apportion blame for keeping the dispute unsettled for no fewer than eighteen years. If impartial enquiries are held, we believe, neither of the two governments nor any of those individual politicians who today claim to be the champions of Kashmir's right of self-determination, can emerge blameless.

### *Pakistan Disillusioned*

Whatever the justification for losing her patience, Pakistan took a most inadvisable step in despatching armed

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men in plain clothes across the cease-fire line. The top leaders of that country are intelligent enough to understand that such a move was frought with grave consequences and could easily lead to war. Misled by the spontaneous uprising of the Kashmiri Muslims in winter 1963-64 when the theft of the sacred relic from the Hazratbal shrine had deeply stirred them and the tumultuous welcome Sheikh Abdullah was accorded by mammoth gatherings at his release in April 1964, the Pakistani leaders hastily concluded that no sooner did the armed infiltrators spread all over the State the Kashmiris would rise in a rebellion against the Congress Government creating such conditions of lawlessness and chaos as to compel the Indian Republic to withdraw its forces and hand over the State to Pakistan. In this Pakistan has been profoundly disillusioned.

A Kashmiri Muslim has been an enigma to his co-religionists outside the Valley because he fails to respond to the call of fanaticism. He is not a blind dogmatist and has therefore caused disappointment to the faithful. Eighty years ago Walter Lawrence wrote : "Holy men from Arabia spoke to me with contempt of the feeble flame of Islam which burns in Kashmir". He stated further that mullahs talked with indignation of the apathy of the Kashmiris towards the religion.[1] This attitude has undergone no change during past decades.

The staunch protagonists of the two-nation theory were always suspicious of the inner working of the Kashmiri mind; they never pinned high hopes on the religious zeal of the Valley Muslim. His peaceful nature and tolerant, non-communal outlook enraged them. Kashmir's composite culture is confusing, incomprehensible to a Pakistani politician. In annoyance, he declares it to be anti-Islamic, unworthy of a true believer. This view must have been fortified when hundreds of infiltrators were spotted and reported to the Indian military authorities by patriotic Muslims from all parts of the Valley.

*Democracy Versus Dictatorship*

Imbued with fanatical fervour for jehad, extremists in Pakistan believed that there armies advancing in the name of

1. *The Valley of Kashmir*, P, 285.

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Islam and equipped with the most modern armaments supplied under NATO and SEATO treaties would easily vanquish the kafir hordes on the battlefield. It was authoritatively reported that President Ayub Khan believed that Pakistan, with its tank corps pressed into service, marching on Delhi would be like taking a stroll. The memory of wars fought ten centuries ago were revived. But the conflict showed that the historical comparisons had lost meaning and could dangerously mislead. After the downfall of Buddhism and the resurgence of Brahman ascendancy, India lay prostrate for a thousand years and an easy prey to the advancing Muslim cohorts which preached brotherhood and equality of all men. To the caste-ridden Indian society, Islam came as a religion of its liberation and was therefore welcomed. But in the twentieth century the roles have been reversed; religion has ceased to be a lever of progress. India stands as the standard bearer of the modern conception of freedom while Pakistan clings to the exploded enslaving theory of medievalism and religious approach to politics. Therefore the battle cry of *Allah-o-Akbar* and the appeal "to bite deep the enemy with the teeth" did not prove of much avail. No wonder the ardent desire to defend secular democracy against the onslaughts of a theocratic-military dictatorship united Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and Parsis in a unique brotherhood, members lying with each other to perform deeds of bravery and valour. It is remarkable that the highest military distinction —Param Vir Chakra—for heroic deeds was earned posthumously in this war by an Indian Muslim—Havildar Abdul Hamid.

The Pakistanis could not even dislodge the Indians from the Valley where the Muslim population is 95%. Indeed, the Indians captured over 220 sq. miles, solely inhabited by Muslims, from the territory of Azad Kashmir and pushed back the Muslim armies from the Uri bulge forcing them to abandon the well-fortified posts. That should be an eye-opener to those who refuse to forsake the belief that religion is the determining force in State politics or in an armed clash.

*Loyalty of Indian Muslims*

For various reasons the minorities especially the Muslims in India have not fully reconciled themselves to the fate of

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living in the land ruled by the Hindu majority. As is admitted on all hands they have not yet been able to integrate emotionally with the rest of the population. It was therefore apprehended that during a war between India and Pakistan the Muslims might waver in their loyalty to the State and an atmosphere might be created leading to communal riots and holocausts on a larger scale than were witnessed in the partition days. This would have proved advantageous to Pakistan and it is widely believed that the leaders of that country banked on this development too for their success. But during the days of the armed conflict Indian Muslim leadership rose to the occasion. Thanks to the prudence of the Muslim leaders of all shades of opinion, to the heroism shown by the Muslim soldiers on the battlefield in fighting against Pakistan and to the loyal attitude of the Muslims in general towards their motherland, an unprecedented communal amity and concord was preserved and a new chapter was opened in the career of the Muslim minority; not a single case of Hindu-Muslim clash occurred during the period of warfare. This surely must have come as a surprise to the Pakistan leaders. If anything, the war removed the deep-seated suspicions about the Muslim attitude in such a crisis from the minds of many Hindus which should help in strengthening the base of Indian secularism by bringing the two big religious communities closer in understanding each other.

### *Pakistan and China*

Despite the feelings of gratitude expressed by Field Marshal Ayub Khan towards China, it could not have escaped the discerning mind of intelligent Pakistanis that the newly made powerful ally in the north had acted all along not with the honest purpose of helping Pakistan in her hour of need but to advance its own unconcealed interests in the subcontinent. Every step taken by China without directly involving herself in the War was deliberately calculated to keep the Indo-Pakistan clash alive and promote anarchy in the subcontinent so as to pave the way for an eventual take over by the forces of left communism.

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*Liberals Withdraw Support*

Last but by no means the least, the small but growing section of those liberal Indians who were critical of India's Kashmir policy and stressed the urgent need of understanding with Pakistan were eclipsed. This loss suffered by Pakistan has passed unnoticed but is bound to be felt by her increasingly in the near future. Compelled by circumstances, distinguished leaders like C. Rajagopalacharya and J. P. Narayan who tenaciously held at great personal risk and in teeth of public opprobrium, that India's Kashmir policy should be reconsidered and reorientated towards a settlement on the basis of State people's freewill have castigated Pakistan for her highly objectionable behaviour. Indeed J. P. judged that Pakistan had lost locus standi in Kashmir and there was no longer any question of the State acceding to Pakistan or achieving an independent status.

*Indian Miscalculations*

Likewise, the Indians learned some lessons from the War. During the past eighteen years whenever India could not have her way in the settlement over the Kashmir issue and tempers rose high, extremists in different political parties vehemently advised the Government to employ other than peaceful means and bring the recalcitrant neighbour to senses. It was persistently demanded that Azad Kashmir territories in any case should be annexed by force of arms. Conscious of the numerical superiority and a greater striking power of their country in all wings of the army, war mongers had no doubt in their mind that once the Indian might was on the move the enemy fortifications would crumble; it would be just a walkover and both wings of Pakistan would be at the feet of Indian generals and commanders. In fact, when the Indian armies crossed the border at Wagah rumours born of wishful thinking were afloat that Lahore had been overrun and the capture of Rawalpindi and Peshawar would not be far off. At certain places in Delhi and outside the Jan Sanghis congratulated each other and sweets were distributed to celebrate the imagined victory. But soon the hilarious scenes surrendered to gloom when it was known that Pakistanis were no butter to be swallowed but

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were offering stiff resistence by fighting for every inch of their land. While India had gained certain advantages in the Lahore and Sialkot sectors and some spectacular victories in the mountainous areas in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan also had seized advantages in Khemkaran and Rajasthan besides the possession of Chhamb-Jaurian in Jammu province. It was felt that things were not so easy as had been forecast. The frequent bombings from the air of the cities in Gujarat, Rajputana, Punjab and Kashmir produced a moderating effect on the thinking of the Indians and the enthusiasm of the warmongers sobered down; the common man despite the war frenzy in which he was willy nilly involved wished the hostilities to end.

The war brought economic distress. The Western powers imposed a ban on economic aid which immensely influenced the market. The prices were already showing upward trend since the Chinese aggression in 1962 ; the Indo-Pak clash gave them a further fillip. Despite the assurances of business magnates, profiteers began to mercilessly exploit the situation and every day necessities became dearer and scarcer. A long war would have been indeed a great tragedy for the poor and the middle classes.

Another matter of deep concern was that in the beginning India found herself almost friendless in the comity of nations. Except Malayasia no one came in open, not even the Arab or African countries, to support her against Pakistan's patent aggression in Kashmir. Even when the U. N. Secretary-General, U Thant, reported to the Security Council on the basis of the report of Chief U. N. Observer, General Nimmo, that armed men from Pakistan had unlawfully crossed the cease-fire line on 5th August 1965 which caused the war, the Security Council evaded administering a direct rebuke to Pakistan for aggression, because it was felt on all hands that the root of the trouble lay in the unsolved political problem of Kashmir. To find oneself almost friendless when one is waging a grim battle is frightening.

*Security Council Resolutions*

Notwithstanding the critical world opinion, the 20 September Resolution of the Security Council was not, however,

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anti-India. Thanks in this respect are due to China which assumed a minatory attitude in the Himalayas and confronted India with an ultimatum of war on very flimsy grounds. No sooner than the Chinese dragon bared its teeth on the north, India's charge of complicity between Pakistan and China received serious consideration by the Western powers. Their enthusiasm for Pakistan's case began to wane. Great concern was roused in their minds for the ultimate security and freedom of the subcontinent as a whole. It was thus that India began to make an impression and her case was heard with sympthy. The first real defeat of Pakistan in the showdown consisted in this and not in the loss of territory or destruction of war material as is asserted by many an Indian publicist.

The three resolutions of the Security Council made it abundantly clear that the world body had refused to accept the contention of Pakistan that there was a local uprising in Kashmir in the beginning of August ; indeed by ordering the early withdrawal of all armed personnel back to the positions held by them before August 5, 1965 in its resolutions of 6 and 20 September, the Council looked with disapproval on the infiltration of armed mujahids from across the border. Viewed in that light, the resolution was virtually a mild rebuke administered to the Pakistan Government which had continued to disclaim any responsibility for the violent disturbances in the State. August 5 in the resolutions was a significant date because it was on this day that infiltrators were first spotted to have crossed the cease fire line. Armed soldiers from either side crossed the line and the international border much later in the month. Therefore, though the Security Council saw wisdom in not declaring Pakistan as aggressor it had almost done so by admitting that mass violation of the cease-fire started on the 5th and Pakistan had behaved unlawfully by despatching the armed infiltrators into Kashmir.

*Kashmir problem Resuscitated*

At the same time, however, the Security Council recognised in its 6th September resolution that cease-fire though of immediate importance, alone will not do ; the issue has to be kept "under urgent and continuous review so that the Council

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may determine what steps may be necessary to secure peace and security for the area".

In their resolution of the 20th September the Security Council made their intentions and aims clearer. After having heard the statements of representatives of India and Pakistan, the world diplomats arrived at the conclusion that "a peaceful settlement of the outstanding difference between the two countries on Kashmir and other related matters" was necessary and as soon as the cease-fire, essential first step towards it, was operative, the august body would consider what measures might be taken to assist towards a settlement of the political problem underlying the conflict.

Thus though Pakistan failed to carry conviction on the question of local revolt by the Kashmiris, she was at least able to resuscitate the tangled Kashmir problem in the hall of the Security Council which previously the world body was ill-disposed to touch.

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## CHAPTER NINE

# THE TASHKENT DECLARATION

For four years Russia observed silence over the Kashmir dispute after it was presented to the Security Council by India in January 1948. The Russian representative usually abstained from voting on the resolutions which the Council adopted from time to time. In January 1952, for the first time Soviet Delegate, Jacob Malik, made a lengthy statement accusing USA and Britain of interference in the internal affairs of Kashmir and held the view that the question could be solved by the Kashmir Constituent Assembly. On May 10, Moscow Radio declared: "The Kashmir people have expressed their will to freedom and self determination in the founding of the Kashmir and Jammu National Congress (Conference) whose main objective is to secure peace and the development of their country". Russia had at long last ceased to sit on the fence and adopted a definite stand of supporting India and the National Conference in the dispute.

Thereafter whenever any step was contemplated to be taken by Security Council which went against the national interests or express wishes of India, USSR opposed it. In fact, for many years the none-too-happy situation was saved for

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India in the Council through the actual exercise or mere indication to exercise the special power of veto by Russia. On 27 April 1962 when a majority of Security Council members wanted to move a resolution on Kashmir the Soviet representative forcefully reiterated his country's views thus:

> The question of Kashmir, which is one of the States of the Republic of India and forms an integral part of India, has been decided by the people of Kashmir itself. The people of Kashmir have decided this matter in accordance with the principles of democracy and in the interests of strengthening friendly relations between the peoples of this region.[1]

*Change in Russian Policy*

With the alliance of China and Pakistan in 1962, however, international politics underwent a significant change. The rivalry between Russia and China within the communist camp and their endeavours to bring as many countries as possible under their respective influence, made it necessary for Russia to woo Pakistan and let it not be entirely sucked up by Peking. This was possible only if USSR would reconsider her attitude towards the economic and political problems facing Pakistan, particularly the Kashmir dispute. There were clear indications that in the past-Khrushchevian period such revision was taking place and active measures were being adopted by Kremlin to help Pakistan in the reconstruction of her economic life and industrialization of the country. The question, however, remained as to what extent the changed attitude was going to affect the Kashmir dispute either ways.

From the day the Indo-Pak armed conflict started in August 1965 the Indian leaders were repeatedly assuring their people that the Russian Government maintained her old policy unaltered and fully supported India's stand on Kashmir. Whenever India's Ambassador in Moscow, T. N. Kaul, met an outstanding Russian dignatory he repeated without exception such assurances on behalf of the Soviet leader. He must have done so over a dozen times. Many Central Ministers and top-ranking Congress leaders who visited USSR or had occasion to meet Soviet leaders on the Indian soil also issued statements to the effect that there had been no change in the

[1]*Security Council Reports*, 1010 meeting, 1962.

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policy of the Russian Government so far as the accession of Kashmir to India was concerned. These categorical declarations of the Indians were neither corroborated nor contradicted by the Russian leaders who maintained a studious silence over the matter. That neither Premier Kosygin or Secretary General Breznov nor any other prominent member of the USSR Government took the trouble of confirming the oft-repeated self-satisfying statements of the desperate Indians, caused misgivings.

Undoubtedly Russia no longer held that Kashmir, as part of India, was a settled fact and Pakistan had no locus standi in the State. By accepting the three resolutions of the Security Council over Indo-Pak clash in which Kashmir had been considered as a basic political dispute between the two contestants, Russia had abandoned the Khrushchevian policy and adopted a milder line calculated to appease Pakistan. This change was further confirmed by the invitations which Premier Kosygin extended to Premier Shastri and President Ayub Khan for holding a conference in Tashkent to straighten out their differences including that over Kashmir.

While during Khrushchev's days the Russians had only one definite and clearly stated view on Kashmir, during the Indo-Pak war they begun to speak with two voices in Delhi and Karachi. At the Indian Capital they saw to it that the complacency among the people about the pro-India policy of the USSR Government was not disturbed, but in Karachi they did not hesitate to deny that Kashmir is a disputed territory and a dangerous problem which should be amicably settled. The Russian Embassy in Pakistan released a Novosty Press Agency despatch on 12th November which said:

> It was always clearly realized in the Soviet Union that the cease-fire between India and Pakistan, although being a great victory of the forces of reason and peace, does not however mean the elimination of the causes of the conflict. The Soviet Government proceeded and continue to proceed from the fact that the elimination of these causes is a matter above all of India and Pakistan. Precisely India and Pakistan should sit down at the conference table in order to settle this old and dangerous issue.

Clearly, to discount the repeated indulgence in wishful thinking by the Indian leaders who harped on the continuance of the pro-India policy of USSR, the Embassy despatch added;

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> Such is the position of USSR in the Indo-Pak conflict. Attempts are at times made to claims that the Soviet Union is allegedly not objective and is inclined to support one side at the expense of the other side. Such opinions are far from reality.

There could be no quarrel with the Russian leaders for altering or amending their views on any matter if it suited their national interest according to their own lights. By flirting with China Pakistan had created a grave problem in the Middle East as well as in South-East Asia for not only the Western and non-aligned nations but also for Russia because it had disturbed the balance of forces and endangered the freedom of several independent countries. In the eyes of the Soviet Union mollification of Pakistan had therefore become essential so that she did not come under the total influence of the Chinese dragon. In fairness, it must be stated that at the same time the Russian leaders were cautious not to antagonise Indian public opinion. In the September confabulations at the Security Council, USSR opposed a move to take up the political problems simultaneously with the withdrawal of forces to the pre-August 5 position, thus supporting the Indian view-point against the entreaties of Pakistan. Nevertheless, the attempt of the Indian leaders to establish that there was absolutely no change in the Soviet attitude misled the country and could prove harmful.

Although with the advice of the Security Council India and Pakistan agreed to end the hostilities and negotiate a settlement, actually the two armies continued to fire at each other and the new cease-fire line was violated innumerable times within a few weeks ; accusations and counter accusations were every day hurled at each other and repeated protests were lodged with the world body which in turn was at its wits' end unable to know how real peace could be restored in the subcontinent.

### *Russia Invites Both Governments*

In these circumstances, when at the close of the year USSR renewed the invitation to the belligerents to meet on the Russian soil to hold talks for arriving at an understanding, both Mohammed Ayub Khan, President of Pakistan, and

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Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister of India, expressed their gratitude and willingness to accept the invitation.

The historic summit conference started at Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan, on 6th January 1966. For four days and nights earnest discussions, punctuated by stormy scenes, were held to thrash out the differences; the Russian hosts, particularly Premier Kosygin, occasionally coming to the aid of the two leaders when the pourparlers seemed to go amiss.

On the eve of the historic summit the top-leaders of India and Pakistan had adopted such rigid attitudes regarding the controversial issues as to cause universal pessimism about the success of the meet. Even uptil the last day of the talks there was slender hope that the heads of the two Governments could come to an agreement. But neither Lal Bahadur Shastri nor Mohammed Ayub Khan was in a position to stick to the rigid position. The War had been indecisive. The Western Powers had banned arms aid to both the countries; the military situation had become intolerable; therefore to the pleasant surprise of all peace-lovers in the world Premier Kosygin, utilising his uncommon powers of persuasion, pressure and wizardry, turned the failing conference into a success. On 10 January dismay and despair were writ large on the deliberations in the early part of the day. But in the evening came the heart-warming announcement that Prime Minister of India and President of Pakistan had arrived at an understanding and signed an agreement.

### *The Historic Declaration*

Being of great importance we need not make any apology for giving here the full text of the Declaration:

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan having met at Tashkent, having decided to improve relations between India and Pakistan hereby declare their firm resolve to restore peaceful relations between the two countries and understanding and friendly relations between their people. They consider the attainment of these objectives vitally important for the welfare of the 600 million people of India and Pakistan.

The President of Pakistan and the Prime Minister of India agreed that both sides will exert all their efforts to create good neighbourly relations between India and Pakistan in accordance with the United Nations

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Charter. They reaffirm their obligations under the Charter not to have recourse to force and to settle their disputes through peaceful means.

They consider the interests of peace in their region, particularly in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, and indeed in the interests of the people of India and Pakistan, were not served by continuance of tension between the two countries. It was against this background that Jammu and Kashmir was discussed and each side set forth its respective positions.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that all armed personnel of the two countries shall be withdrawn not later than February 25 to the positions they held prior to August 5, 1965, and both sides will observe the cease-fire terms and the cease-fire line.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that the relations between India and Pakistan shall be based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other.

The Prime Minister of India and President of Pakistan have agreed that both sides will discourage any propaganda directed against the other country and will encourage propaganda which will promote the development of friendly relations between the two countries.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that the High Commissioner of India to Pakistan and the High Commissioner of Pakistan to India will return to their posts and normal functioning of diplomatic relations will be restored. Both Governments shall observe the Geneva Conventions on diplomatic intercourse,

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed to consider measures towards the restoration of economic and trade relations as well as cultural exchanges between India and Pakistan and to take measures to implement the existing agreements between India and Pakistan.

The Prime Minister of India and President of Pakistan have agreed that they will give instructions to their respective authorities to carry out the repatriation of the prisoners of War.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that both sides will continue meetings both at the highest and at other levels on matters of direct concern to both countries. Both sides have recognized the need to set up joint Indian-Pakistani bodies which will report to their Governments in order to decide what further steps should be taken.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that both sides will contiune the discussions of questions relating to the problems of refugees and evictions of illegal immigrations which will prevent the exodus of people. They further agreed to discuss the return of the property and assets taken over by either side in connection with the conflict.

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan record their feelings of deep appreciation and gratitude to the leaders of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Government and personally to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR for their constructive, friendly and noble part in bringing about the present meeting which has resulted in mutually satisfactory results. They also express to the Government and friendly people of Uzbekistan their sincere thankfulness for their over-

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whelming reception and generous hospitality. They invite the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR to witness this declaration.

### *A Compromise Document*

By the very nature of things the agreement could give complete satisfaction neither to the people of India nor to the people of Pakistan; it had to be a compromised document recognising certain important points of both the sides while ignoring or rejecting others which were either unreasonable or impracticable under the existing circumstances. Moreover, the language of parts of the Declaration had to be flexible as could bear more than one interpretation. Nevertheless, most of the clauses of the Declaration were clear and gave precise direction to the parties, for making certain moves. And the merit of the agreement lay in its aim of restoring the spirit of peace and reconciliation between the two neighbouring countries which had violently clashed in a bloody war only a few months back.

### *Opposition of Extremists*

The Declaration was opposed by extremist elements in both the countries. If in India the opponents appeared to be less ferocious or vociferous than in Pakistan the reason should be sought not in the Declaration being in any way more favourable to India but in the deepest sympathy for Lal Bahadur Shastri who set his seal of approval to it not only by his pen but by the supreme sacrifice of his life. For only a couple of hours after signing the Declaration the Indian Prime Minister succumbed to a sudden and severe heart attack at Tashkent.

However, despite the opposition the Declaration effected a striking change in the deteriorated relations between India and Pakistan. Skirmishes on the border stopped altogether and the armed forces were disengaged; the High Commissioners returned to their posts, and other steps were taken by the two Governments to lessen tension. The leaders of the two countries firmly and frequently stated that they were determined to carry out the provisions of the agreement in letter and spirit. On assumption of office as the new Prime Minister of India, Nehru's gifted daughter, Indira Gandhi, made it clear that she stood by the Tashkent Declaration and would do her utmost to imple-

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ment it. On 30th January 1966 addressing a huge public gathering in Delhi she advised that "the Tashkent spirit must be carried forward and the forces that sought to weaken it must be combated."

However, the Declaration failed to bring about permanent peace and friendship between the two countries.

*Rigid Attitude Softens*

In their three resolutions the U. N. Security Council had made certain proposals to India and Pakistan to cease fire, end the hostilities and withdraw the forces to the positions held by them before 5, August 1965. Both the countries had formally accepted these resolutions but, as the subsequent events had shown, there appeared little sincere intention on their part to promptly implement the resolutions; accusations and counter accusations were hurled at each other for violating the cease fire and in one form or the other hostilities continued as before. The Tashkent Declaration was nothing but an elaboration to the Security Council Resolutions with the vital difference that the USSR had through persuasion made the two Governments see reason, abandon the pugnacious attitude and implement the agreement in a spirit of reconciliation. The leaders fully realised that in order to solve the numerous problems, both internal and external, facing them they needed peace and tranquillity. And the first step to achieve that objective was to restore the position ante bellum. Therefore, at Tashkent Indian leaders no longer insisted on retaining "at any cost" Haji Pir Pass, Kargil Peaks or Tithwal Post, or on demanding that Pakistan should call off the infiltrators and undertake not to send them afresh; nor did Pakistan leaders demand settlement of Kashmir issue first before any agreement is signed.

The speed and sincerity with which the two Governments acted to set right the many wrongs that had been done during the days of hostilities inspired confidence that normalcy would return in Indo-Pak relations by the end of February. The hope was fortified when on 29 January a final document setting forth an agreement for the withdrawal of armed personnel was signed in Lahore at a joint meeting of military representatives of the two countries under the auspices of Gen.

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Marambio, U. N. representative; the withdrawls were made by 25 February as laid down in the Tashkent Declaration. Other measures taken in the spirit of the Declaration were the full restoration of diplomatic relations, restoration of telecommunication, permission to overfly each other's territory and restoration of postal services.

There is no gainsaying the fact that the restoration of the pre-August 5 conditions in the relations of the two countries was a great achievement to the credit of Tashkent. It is doutful if with all its authority U. N. Security Council would have been able to accomplish this task that it had set for itself.

But this was only a beginning. As Premier Kosygin observed in the concluding session of the Tashkent meeting the Declaration only "furnished real foundations for conditions of peace in that highly important area of Asia". Undoubtedly it was no ordinary achievement and one could not underrate its importance but at the same time it was evident the new peace could not endure long if the leaders of the two countries rested on their oars after the withdrawl of the forces to August 5 positions.

*Difficulties in Implementation*

The substantial difficulties arose when implemention of other clauses dealing with "problems of refugees", "illegal immigrations", "exodus of people" and above all "matters of direct concern to both countries" which obviously included Kashmir dispute, was taken in hand.

These clauses were interpreted by the two countries quite differently. While in Pakistan the leaders read in them the reopening of the Kashmir issue and certainly need of its solution through peaceful negotiations, in India it was believed that the Declaration should be read as having shelved the issue once and for all. This meant that sooner or later the bickerings that led to the War would restart and if wise statesmanship was not displayed on both sides the history might repeat itself and all the good work done at Tashkent might be undone.

This danger came nearer when a conference was held at Rawalpindi in March 1966 to consider the ways and means of

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further implemention of the other provisions of Tashkent Declaration between Foreign Ministers of the two countries without achieving any success. Indeed, after the failure of this meet the rancorous propaganda against each other was restarted and feverish preparations for another armed clash were in the making on both sides of the border.

Renewed efforts were made in September-October 1966 to reopen the talks and have a series of discussions between the two countries. But Pakistan let it be known through third country diplomats that she was not interested in the talks unless India was prepared to make some prior "concessions and commitments over Kashmir". India, however, could go no further than that either side could raise all or any problems during the talks without any precondition. This offer Pakistan brusquely brushed aside and the attempts to bring the two countries to meet at the conference table ended in failure.

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## CHAPTER TEN

# WHY SECULARISM MATTERS

Famous throughout the world for its natural and scenic beauties no less than for an invigorating, healthy and superb climate, the Kashmir Valley is a prize possession. Situated in the Eastern hemisphere where the borders of five powers—Russia, China, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India—meet, its strategic importance is immense and cannot be over emphasised.

To the Hindus, since times immemorial, the Valley is the abode of gods every inch of whose soil is described in the holy scripture as sacred. Thousands of the religious-minded Hindus flock every year, in the month of August, from all parts of the subcontinent to participate in the pilgrimage to Swami Amar Nath. To Muslims Kashmir is the land of *mushaiqs* and *awlias* besides being populated mostly by the believers. It is, therefore, not surprising that India and Pakistan are intensely desirous of having the Valley regardless of cost and sacrifice.

But this explanation is not sufficient to fully comprehend the underlying causes of the grim clash in which India and Pakistan are involved. At the time of partition, India abandoned areas no less sacred or strategically important. The Congress leaders were deeply attached to North Western

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Frontier Province (NWFP), particularly due to the unflinching loyalty of the Khan Brothers and the Khudal Khidmatgars who valiantly fought for freedom under the Congress tri-colour flag. For many years after the introduction of provincial autonomy in 1937, Pathans had voted the Congress to power in general elections.

But India yielded the province and, as Khan Abdul Ghaffar is repeatedly complaining, "threw the Pathans to the wolves". In like manner the Muslim League leaders had to surrender a good deal left behind in India, notably the States of Hyderabad, Bhopal and Rampur which had been laboriously built as centres of Muslim culture. As a territory, Kashmir is of no greater importance or of more sentimental value than these States. Is this then much ado about nothing?

### *Battle of Values*

The cause of the fierce tussle lies much deeper. When the problem is studied closely it will be found that in Kashmir India and Pakistan are fighting a battle of values. Whatever might have been the case in 1947 at the time of partition, the events and developments of the past nineteen years have proved that primarily this is an ideological warfare in which the parties are consciously or unconsciously fighting for certain principles which the two countries espouse. India has set up secular democracy as its goal under which all people living in the vast country without any distinction of colour, religion, caste or sex will be treated as equal before the law. Pakistan has resolved to build a religious state to be guided by the principles, tenets and traditions of Islam. Despite the protestations of the Pakistan leaders, inequalities between Muslims and non-Muslims are bound to prevail in such a State as will be presently shown. Thus the fight over Kasmir is not so much for territorial gain; it is in fact a struggle for the supremacy of a principle. If the State stays as a free unit of the federation of secular and democratic Indian people, India will have established the paramountcy of modern values and human ideals over the forces of theocratic reaction and medievalism. In the alternative, if Kashmir strays into Pakistan it will drag the subcontinent back into morass of religious fanaticism with unpredictable consequences.

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*Two Important Facts*

Now at the outset of this discussion it is proper to recognise two important facts. First, that India, Pakistan or any other country may hold any opinion about the future affiliations of the Kashmir State, the final verdict must lie with the Kashmiris themselves.

In making their choice the Kashmiris may commit a blunder and suffer on this account for decades to come but no one can, in principle, deny them the right to shape their own destiny. The second thing to remember is that, considering the past history of the dispute, the effect of any solution of the Kashmir tangle cannot remain confined to the subcontinent ; it will have wider repercussions and may influence the future of many newly freed emerging nations in Asia and Africa.

*Evolution of Secularism*

The struggle for freedom of man is as old as humanity. Man lives to be happy through unrestricted, continuous and creative unfoldment of his personality. He brought society into existence to make a co-operative endeavour for the attainment of this aim. It is not yet established that savage man lived all by himself. We can, however, say that the formation of tribe was necessary for man to face hostile forces, both human and natural, in order to avoid annihilation. In primeval human societies the law of the tribe was supreme. All tribesmen were brothers but those outside it were enemies and were treated harshly ; but however limited in scope, tribal philosophy proved an useful instrument in making man freer than he was as savage.

Ancient Greece attained a high standard of culture and conceived the lofty ideal of democracy for the first time in human history. But the Greek society was divided into patricians and plebians. In the city states of Hellenes very few enjoyed the fruits of democracy, a vast majority suffered the humiliation of slavery ; women also were deprived of franchise and given an inferior status.

The human society is a dynamic organisation. Therefore, in course of time when sufficient progress was registered

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the philosophy of tribalism failed to satisfy advanced individuals or be of value to humanity. Its ideals and principles were not only inadequate for the purpose it had been serving, in course of time they also became positively harmful and had to be changed if human progress was not to be impeded or stopped. The great religions of the world—Buddhism, Christianity and Islam—rose to end tribalism and establish a bigger brotherhood of man on a broader basis. All religions claim to abolish distinction between man and man irrespective of nationality, colour or class. This is the cardinal principle on which they stand. The innumerable gods of the various tribes yielded place to the one supreme authority of monotheism taught by the world religions. With their inspiration large states were created and big empires founded.

The descoveries made in different branches of science brought unprecedented economic prosperity to the world, destroyed boundaries between nations, abolished distances, and mingled races unknown to each other before. What is more, the sciences exploded many myths, superstitions and cherished beliefs. One after the other orthodox religious states, no longer able to withstand the onward rush of new ideas, began to totter. There was a crisis in the human mind. The French Encyclopaedists took up the challenge and solved it by rejecting the supernatural authority in mundane affairs and by deciding human problems with the aid of reason. They introduced the secular ideal of the State. "Liberty, equality and fraternity" became the symbols of the French Revolution which owned the philosophy of the Encyclopaedists. The modern world was born.

### *Tussle Between Religion and Secularism*

For the last hundred and seventy years the reactionary protagonists of the religious ideology have been vigorously resisting the advance of secularism with diminishing chances of success. A religious state can be created and maintained through absolute power in the hands of a chosen few blessed by God; the masses must follow them and obey their commands. The ideal of liberty, equality and fraternity is an antithesis of the religious outlook. Democracy and secularism

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go hand in hand; one cannot exist without the other. In proportion to the element of religious thinking in the political philosophy of a state it falls short of the ideal of democracy and freedom. All those countries which own a state religion or are influenced by religious principles in the conduct of public affairs virtually live in medieval times and cannot benefit by all the achievements of science and philosophy to which every nation is heir. In a religious state there can be neither democracy nor justice; minorities are doomed to live as subservient people who can enjoy no independence apart from what is allowed to them by the majority community.

From the early times in human history a struggle between the reactionary and progressive forces has been constantly going on. In the onward march of humanity, peoples in different parts of the world have witnessed occasional setbacks but the final victory has invariably been achieved by the new revolutionary forces. This is the fundamental principle of the law of evolution. French Revolution having indicated the way, religious basis of state politics was gradually replaced by secularity in Europe and North America. Those nations which still adhere to the outmoded theory remain stunted in growth and continue to live in the back waters of history. But sooner or later they are bound to undergo an intellectual revolution, abandon the religious outlook and follow the path of progress.

### *Jinnah's Testament*

In this connection it is wellworth studying the case of Pakistan. The idea of dividing the Indian subcontinent was conceived on purely religious grounds. The Muslim League leaders relentlessly fought for the creation of a Muslim State for over a decade but when ultimately the long cherished desire was fulfilled, the sponsor and the standard bearer of the movement, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, made a startling declaration about political philosophy which should guide modern Muslims. Addressing the inaugural session of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly on 14 August 1947, he observed:

If you work in a spirit of co-operation, forgetting the past and burying the hatchet, I will say that everyone of you no matter to

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what community you belong, no matter what your colour, caste and creed, is first second and last a citizen of the State with equal rights, privileges and obligations.

You are free to go to your temples, and to your places of worship in this state of Pakistan while you belong to any religion, caste or creed ; *that has nothing to do with the business of the State*". (emphasis mine)

Jinnah added :

We are starting the State with no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, between caste or creed. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one state. We shall keep that in front of us as our ideal. Hindus will cease to be Hindus and Muslims will cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense because that is a personal faith with each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the Nation.

From the propounder of two-nation theory who persistently advocated religion as the basis of nationality these words are revealing. It is the denial of the ideal for the acceptance of which Jinnah fought indefatigably through the most active part of his life. Yet modernist as he was in spirit, he could not help seeing at the end of the struggle that secularism and not religious outlook would make the people of Pakistan happy and prosperous. It is a different matter that these valuable conclusions of the illustrious founder were cast to the winds by his successors, But there is reason to believe that had Jinnah lived longer the story of Pakistan might have been altogether a different one.

### *Secularism and Kashmir*

A study of the Kashmir chronicles painstakingly recorded by indigenous historians for a period of five thousand years, affords ample evidence to show that like other peoples in the world, the Kashmiris have passed through eras of progress and reaction. Broadly speaking, the evolutionary processes from savagery to tribalism, then to the establishment of a religious state and finally the secularisation of politics are similar to those that have taken place in other parts of the subcontinent. But there have been certain noteworthy trends in the cultural development of Kashmir which are peculiar to it. After the downfall of Buddhism, the Kashmiri thinkers evolved a philosoby synthesising the older systems of Indian thought and the doctrines of Buddha; it is known as Trika Shastra. Essentially

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an idealist philosophy, it does not altogether deny the objective reality of the world as does the Vedanta and the Mayavada of Shankara. All writers on Trika Shastra have stressed that as a system of philosophy and as an applied science it is meant for all human beings without distinction of creed, colour or sex.

For nearly six hundred years from eighth to the fourteenth century, the Trika guided the Kashmiris in shaping their personal lives as also the public affairs. Election of rulers and deposition of bad monarchs are not unknown to Kashmir history. Low caste untouchables and even men born out of wedlock have by dint of hard labour and intelligence held high offices in the state and reached peaks of glory. As stated earlier, women were afforded opportunity to distinguish themselves in many fields of social activity.[1]

The Muslims captured power in 1339 A.D. which opened the Valley to the influence of Islam and conversion of the people to the new faith; another ideological clash took place in the country which resulted in the emergence of a dynamic eclectic philosophy called Religious Humanism.

The founder of Religious Humanism, Lal Ded, was a Brahmin. Her most distinguished disciple was Nund Rishi, a Muslim. The fact that both of them are equally owned and held in high esteem by Hindus and Muslims should suffice to testify the non-communal essence of the philosophy. The two leaders taught love of all human beings irrespective of birth, caste or sex and equality of all men and women. As already stated, after the death of Nund Rishi his chief disciples organised an order of religious humanists known as Rishis. In his memoirs Jehangir wrote about them that "they possess simplicity and are without pretence. They abuse no one. They restrain the tongue of desire and the foot of seeking. They eat no flesh, they have no wives, and always plant fruit bearing trees in fields so that men may benefit by them, themselves desiring no advantage."

Nund Rishi is the patron saint of the Valley people; his teachings heavily influenced by Trika philosophy exert

[1] For biographies of Kashmiri queens and notable women see Prem Nath Bazaz. *Daughters of the Vitasta* (1959), Pamposh Publications, New Delhi.

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tremendous authority on the intellectual life of the Kashmiri Muslims.

During the five centuries of Muslim rule, Kashmir Hinduism also underwent transformation and changed its complexion. In balance, the new synthesis of Kashmir culture became broadbased and was characterised by respect for the dignity of man, love of all human beings, tolerance for dissent, peaceful pursuit of happiness and hatred for cruelty and bloodshed.

With a few exceptions, the Muslim sultans generally followed the cardinal principles of Religious Humanism in governing the people. Sikandar no doubt attempted to build a religious state depending on orthodox Shariat but was only successful in creating turmoil and disaffection. His son Zain-ul-abidin was a staunch believer in equality of all human beings before law irrespective of their religion or caste. By implementing the philosophy of Religious Humanism in administering the State, he ushered in a golden era in the Valley. Even today he is remembered by the Kashmiris as Bud Shah (Great Monarch). Zain-ul-abidin laid norms of administration and public behaviour which good rulers and leaders have tried to emulate.

Ignorant of the history and evolution of composite Kashmir culture, outside Muslims are baffled by the liberal views and tolerant behaviour of the Kashmiris. But to anyone who reads and interprets the past of the Valley in a detached and dispassionate manner there is nothing astonishing in the secular outlook of the people.

### *Secularisation of State Politics*

Endowed with a noble cultural heritage, Kashmir stood at the threshold of modern scientific age when the British imperialists sold the Valley to Maharaja Gulab Singh in 1846. So far as the people were concerned the sale proved to be a mixed blessing. Modernism was no doubt introduced in education and statecraft but by getting closely associated with the Indian politics, particularly the developments in the Punjab, Kashmiris imperceptibly imbibed some element of religious bigotry,

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however alien it was to their nature and temperament. So when the movement for the achievement of freedom and social democracy was launched in the early thirties, it took a communal turn. In 1932, the Kashmir Muslim Conference was founded to end the absolute rule of the Dogras and set up a responsible government of the people in its place. For seven years State politics was deeply coloured by religion and a gulf separated the Muslims from the non-Muslims. Fortunately, the leaders of the movement realised before it was too late that religious approach to politics could not lead the people to their destination. In June 1939, an event of historic significance took place when Muslim Conference was converted into National Conference which was meant to be a representative organisation of all Kashmiris without any distinction of creed or sex.

The secularisation of state politics was effected by the influential Muslim leaders (173 delegates in the special session of the Muslim Conference out of 176 voting for it) without any outside interference. It is noteworthy that among those who passionately pleaded for the change were Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, Chowdhri Ghulam Abbas and Mirza Afzal Beg. Induced by their own independent thinking born of cultural background and personal experience made in the political field for seven years, the leaders felt convinced that to make religion the basis of politics would hinder national growth and frustrate the people. What followed proved the wisdom of the decision. Year after year the freedom forces were strengthened and the autocratic rule of the Maharaja weakened, This process culminated in the upheaval of 1947 when at the time of independence of the subcontinent the country was divided and Kashmir confronted with the choice of acceding either to Secularist India or the Islamic State of Pakistan. It was a vexing issue and a choice either ways would be beset with many difficulties. Yet the National Conference, under the guidance of its top-most leader, Sheikh Abdullah, after careful consideration, decided that Kashmir will form part of India. Backed by the support of the State's premier political organisation, the Maharaja ratified through his accredited representative, the instrument

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of accesion as required under the provisions of the Independence Act. It however needed ratification by the state people.

*Nineteen Years' Experience*

The Indian leaders frequently assert that Kashmir is a symbol of Indian secularism. On 17 September 1953, presenting this viewpoint, Jawaharlal Nehru declared :

> We have always regarded the Kashmir problem as symbolic for us, as it has far-reaching consequences in India. Kashmir is symbolic as it illustrates that we are a secular State, that Kashmir with a large majority of Muslims, has nevertheless of its own free will wished to be associated with India. Kashmir has consequences both in India and Pakistan because if we disposed of Kashmir on the basis of the old two-nation theory obviously millions of people in India and millions in East Pakistan would be powerfully affected. Many of the wounds that had healed might open out again.

An impartial observer can recognise the validity of this statement and the finality of the accession only when the Kashmiris freely choose to remain with India. India's claim remains unverified, leaders' repeated statements to the contrary notwithstanding.

In fairness, however, it should be conceded that undismayed by the evil forces unleashed by partition and quite in keeping with their resolve to uphold the banner of secularism, India adopted a constitution which is free from sectarian bias and religious prejudice, believes in the sovereignty and dignity of the individual, has faith in social democracy and affords full opportunities to the Indian people to abandon the medieval outlook and enter the modern scientific age.

Addressing the Kashmir Constituent Assembly on 5 November 1951, Sheikh Abdullah succinctly assessed the value of the Indian Constitution for the benefit of his followers, thus :

> The real character of a State is revealed it its constitution. The Indian Constitution has set before the country the goal of secular democracy based upon justice, freedom and equality for all without distinction. This is the bedrock of modern democracy. This should meet the argument that the Muslims of Kashmir cannot have security in India where the large majority of population are Hindus. Any unnatural cleavage between religious groups is the legacy of imperialism, and no modern state can afford to encourage artificial divisions if it is to achieve progress and prosperity. The Indian Constitution has amply and finally repudiated the concept of a religious state, which is a throwback to medievalism, by guaranteeing the equality of rights of all citizens irrespective of their religion, colour, caste and class.

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> The national movement in our State naturally gravitates towards these principles of secular democracy. The people here will never accept a principle which seems to favour the interests of one religion or social group against another. This affinity in political principles as well as in past associations and our common path of suffering in the cause of freedom, must be weighed properly while deciding the future of the State.[2]

### *The Glaring Contrast*

True, the Indians have at times failed to live upto the high ideals and grand principles enshrined in the Constitution. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in a public speech on 5 February 1967 regretted "that despite all the provisions in the Constitution, we have not done all we could for the Muslims and other minorities".[3]

There have been occasions when the Indian Parliament and the Union Government have exhibited strong tendencies of narrow-mindedness and intolerance. But, all in all, endeavours are constantly made to be fair to non Hindu minorities and firm measures are taken to control the erring members or sections of the society when they behave unlawfully or mischievously. Whether in the Union Cabinet, the Governments of the States or the local administrations persons of all the communities are more or less adequately represented and afforded opportunity to rise in accordance with their talent and capacity to work.

The Vice-President of India, Dr. Zakir Hussain, is a Muslim who is a prospective candidate and likely choice for presidentship when the highest office falls vacant in May 1967. The Muslims have adorned the offices of governors of States, judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court ; they have functioned as trusted ambassadors, secretaries, departmental heads and other responsible officers in the centre as well as in different units of the Indian Republic.

In striking contrast to this, the Pakistan leaders failed for a decade in one attempt after another to frame a constitution for their country. Ignoring the laudable notions expressed by M.A. Jinnah in his opening address to the Pakistan Constituent

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[2] *Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly, Opening Addresses* P. 18.

[3] *Hindustan Times* dated 6 February 1967

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Assembly, the men who came to power in Pakistan rejected secularism outright and laboured to lay the foundations of a religious state. But the constitution promulgated by one government was abrogated by another. The Constitution now in force is a document hardly suited to modern society and its needs, for it declares that sovereignty belongs to Almighty and the people enjoy life and the blessings of nature through His mercy. There is a sharp distinction between the Muslims and non-Muslims, the latter being treated as no better than inferior nationals who are statutorily debarred from holding the office of the President. Religion is conspicuously present in every part of the Constitution and it is not surprising that Muslim divines have an effective say in the conduct of public affairs. On March 1, 1962 introducing the Constitution, Mohammed Ayub Khan observed in his address to the nation :

> We are an ideological state and the basis of our nationality is the ideology of Islam. Whilst making material progress, we naturally wish to do so under the umbrella of Islamic spiritual and moral values......We have therefore provided an organisation called the Advisory Council of Islamic ideologies.........whilst making laws the President and the legislatures have been enjoined to seek their advice for giving them an Islamic bent.

It is well to remember that there are over ten million non-Muslims (Hindus, Buddhists and Christians) still living in Pakistan.

Inequality of people is inherent in a religious state and non-Muslims can never expect to be treated equally with Muslims under such a dispensation. The unfair treatment of minorities is in full evidence in the central and the provincial cabinets, embassies overseas, high courts and the secretariat, where no Hindu is a member and in the rank and file of public services where very few non-Muslims are employed.

It is remarkable that in the war between India and Pakistan while armies of the former were composed of jawans belonging to every community—Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian and Parsi—the soldiers in Pakistan Armed Forces did not have even a single Hindu. The military awards for feats of exceptional valour on the Indian side were equally shared by warriors of all faiths, the highest distinction—Param Vir Chakra—being conferred posthumously on a Muslim Havaldar, Abdul Hamid.

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No wonder the war improved the communal situation in India and convinced many a sceptic of the effectiveness of secularism as an instrument of progress.

### *Despotism in Azad Kashmir*

As if it were to give the Kashmiris a foretaste of the fate that was in store for them if they decided to accede to Pakistan, a part of the State came into the possession of that Dominion as a result of the political disturbances in 1947. This area was bombastically called Azad (Free) Kashmir denoting that the Kashmiris living in it had been liberated from autocracy. At the time of its formation it was flamboyantly announced that the people living in the Azad territory would soon see the fulfilment of their aspirations for which they had been struggling for over fifty years. What actually happened subsequently in Azad Kashmir during the last nineteen years is a sorry tale of the wretched people living in the area. Denied even the small constitutional freedom earned under the Hindu despot, the helpless Muslims are held down by force by their own coreligionists. No legislative assembly to voice the public opinion, no municipality, no district board, no panchayat or any such self-governing institution has been in existence in Azad Kashmir ; hands of the clock were turned backwards. Finally, Pakistan unbashedly took the "free" state under its protective wings ;treating it like a dependency: a joint secretary of the Central Gevernment is functioning as the overlord who can appoint or dismiss the local authorities at his sweet will without ascertaining the wishes of the people. The unceremonious expulsion of K. H. Khurshied from the Presidentship of Azad Kashmir in 1964 and his imprisonment for supporting "Independent Kashmir" move bears testimony to this fact. Remarkably, earlier for over two years, the victimised politician had been boosted as the head of Azad Kashmir chosen by an elected advisory board of the Kashmir people.

### *The Deciding Factor*

Despite these facts, the righteousness of Kashmir cause cannot be proved on the battlefield nor by the superior military

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might. Pakistan leaders who derive inspiration solely from religious wars fought thirteen centuries ago and ignore the subsequent evolution of political philosophy as a consequence of scientific discoveries, may rely on success in arms ; not so India which possesses a historic sense in dealing with national and international affairs. The days are passed when people could be conquered by arms, subjugated by force and converted to new faiths. In this era of anti-colonialism and profound social revolutions, conversion can take place only through the method of persuasion and by education. It is not suggested that any armed invasion from across the border should not be met with force. An aggressive Pakistan should be firmly and strongly repulsed as was done in September 1965. But India can ill-afford to forget that the ultimate victory in this ideological tussle can be achieved only when the Kashmiris willingly and without any pressure from outside, consent to be part of secular India and refuse to have anything to do with Pakistan. Plebiscite or no plebiscite, the will of the Kashmir people to be members of the great Indian family must be unfettered and unrestricted to ensure the final victory of Indian Secularism.

If despite their historic traditions, the Kashmiris are unwilling to hold aloft the banner of secularism, the reason should be sought in the unwise policies pursued by the Governments of Kashmir and India, as well as in the ignorance of the State people which authorities have done little to dispel.

*Grave Consequences*

The partition of the subcontinent was proposed and accepted as a solution of the communal problem. But as the painful experience since 1947 has shown, it has not achieved that purpose but only aggravated the situation and exacerbated the feelings in both the countries. The minority problem is as vexing in India and Pakistan today as it was in the entire subcontinent before partition. The creation of two antagonistic states everready to fight with modern weapons has added to the gravity of the situation.

Neither India nor Pakistan is a country with people holding identical views and ideas. It would be erroneous to believe

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that every Indian is a secularist and all Pakistanis are religion-ridden. Such opinion would be unrealistic and unfair. In India there are powerful parties and groups which are ardently desirous of converting this country into a Hindu State. Individuals with such outlook are to be found within the ruling party and the central and state cabinets. In Pakistan, there are elements in public life which detest the religious approach to politics and have faith in secular way of life.

As already noted, on the choice of the Kashmiris will depend to a considerable degree the future complexion of the political growth in the subcontinent. If the Kashmiris freely decide to ratify the 1947 resolution of the National Conference, consequences of vital importance are destined to follow.

To begin with, such a decision will be in consonance with the political history, cultural traditions and deeper nature of the Kashmiris. There will be no setback to progress and the society will follow its natural evolutionary course without break.

In India, the forces of liberalism will be immensely strengthened while warlike reactionary sections and groups will be frustrated and disorganised. Already alone in Asia valiantly holding the flag of progress aloft, India will become an impregnable citadel of democracy and a beaconlight for Afro-Asian nations in political distress. The non-Hindu minorities will come into their own and attain the position of equality as envisaged in the Constitution. No longer will fanatics dare challenge the loyalty of the Muslims.

Because Kashmir issue will have been settled democratically, Indian Communism which thrives on the authoritarian mentality will receive a severe blow. To the newly liberated nations now confused about their future course of action, India will become an example to emulate ; everywhere faith in democracy will be reinforced.

Undoubtedly such mature decision of the Kashmiris will falsify the notion that Hindus and Muslims are different peoples who can never unite ; the two-nation theory will meet its doom. And the mullah-dominated politics of Pakistan will be overhauled ; a revolutionary process will set in motion in that

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country ; progressive elements will come to the fore and the reactionary, religion-ridden rulers will have to yield the leadership to men gifted with modern outlook. Pakistan will arise a powerful, progressive state friendly to her neighbour.

A victory on the battlefield, doubtful in the extreme, even if achieved by India, cannot bring about such a devoutly wished change in Pakistan. Armed clashes and defeats only make people rigid in their narrow views and stubborn in their attitudes as the recent war has shown. No sensible Indian would think of it or waste his energy in this direction.

But if secularism suffers a reverse in Kashmir too and the State people vote for Pakistan, the consequences are sure to be disastrous. In that case India will emerge as a Hindu State dominated by the extremist communal elements. The brave leaders who are at present tirelessly labouring to hold the fort of progress will be eclipsed ; there will be inroads into the liberal Constitution and bit by bit it will be denuded of every merit, if not thoroughly revised all at once. There will be a race with Pakistan in narrow-mindedness and intolerance. Non-Hindus, especially Muslims, even if allowed to live as citizens will be treated as inferiors. A strong wave of counter-revolution will engulf the subcontinent and South-East Asia, on the crust of which Pekinese Communism will ride in triumph. For decades, if not for centuries, the people of these countries will have to forsake the ambition of establishing democracy. It will be an evil day indeed for the humanity.

### *The Historic Choice*

These and similar other important considerations have to be brought to the full consciousness of the Kashmiris. Whether this can be done within the brief period of respite afforded by the Tashkent Declaration is more than one can tell. But believing that there is no other way of avoiding the disaster and achieving the objective, the task has to be accomplished and a selected band of intelligent and experienced men set to work.

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It is an irony of history that by a combination of fortuitous circumstances a tiny nation of Kashmiris has been placed in a position of great importance where it can be instrumental in making or marring the future of so many. The Kashmiris have to make a truly historic choice. India can help them to make it wisely by trying to understand their feelings, sentiments and aspirations, by allaying their fears and suspicions and, above all, by redeeming the pledges given to them about autonomy as clearly mentioned in the Indian Constitution. An awareness of the historic choice before the Kashmiris must have been uppermost in the mind of Gandhiji when he said during the trying times following partition : "My sole hope and prayer is that Kashmir should become a beacon-light to the benighted subcontinent".[1]

[1] Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi* : *The Last Phase, Vol. II.*, P. 500.

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## CHAPTER ELEVEN

# THE WAY OUT

The Kashmir problem does not arise out of the fact, as is commonly believed, that Pakistan wants to have the Valley by hook or by crook but because Indian leaders have failed to convince the large majority of the Kashmiris during the last nineteen years that they can live happily and fearlessly under Hindu majority rule in India. That Kashmir State is legally and constitutionally a part of India is undeniable. But law which in essence is nothing but an expression of the people's desire to organise social life loses all moral force when the majority of the people is opposed to it or ceases to have any respect for it. Replying to a debate on Kashmir in the Indian Parliament on 7 August 1956, Jawaharlal Nehru reminded the opposition:

> The strongest bonds that bind will not be of your armies or even of your Constitution to which so much reference has been made but bonds which are stronger than constitution and laws and armies—bonds that bind through love and affection and understanding.

### *Problem Cannot be Ignored.*

It is futile to go on stressing that Kashmir has finally and irrevocably decided to accede to India when there is no clear evidence to show that the Kashmiris voluntarily support this stand.

India spent billions in Kashmir during the past nineteen years to defend the State frontiers, to run the local administra-

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tion, to feed the people, to improve their economy and in several other ways. But it is a pity that precious little was done to properly educate the Kashmiris in order to make them understand why secular democracy is preferable to theocratic military dictatorship.

The indian Government has pursued an ill-advised policy of handing over the State and its people to the tender mercies of a favourite in whom complete confidence was placed in the mistaken belief that he would deliver the goods. Never did the Union Government or any top-ranking Indian leader care to know the real mind of the Kashmiris. It was considered sufficient that the ruling party men vociferously, albeit hypocritically, raised slogans pleasing to the Indian ear. What happened to the State people seemed to have been nobody's concern. The result is that today India is up against a tough problem.

Pakistan is rightly blamed for having provoked the hostilities in August 1965 but let us not forget that in winter 1963-64 India had to face no smaller trouble in the shape of the Sacred Relic Restoration Movement which was a purely local uprising mainly caused by the pent-up feelings of the Muslims who had been suppressed for seventeen years by oppressive rule. So it will not do to say that there is no Kashmir problem for India. It is very much there and has to be solved. Serious troubles of greater magnitude are bound to recur in future if the present policy is allowed to continue.

### *Two Solutions*

There are two different ways of solving the problem: First, the dispute may be settled with Pakistan by negotiations and an agreement arrived at acceptable to both the countries as well as to the State people; and, second, a sincere and earnest endeavour made to mollify the Kashmiris, to allay their fears and suspicions and to inspire confidence in them that they will be safe and happy by continuing to remain with India.

Settlement with Pakistan is perhaps easier and commonly understandable solution of the two. However, judging by the pronouncements of Pakistani leaders and their adamant attitude such a settlement can be no other than that at least the Valley should be handed over to them after holding a

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plebiscite or without such a bothersome process. Most Pakistanis hold it as an article of faith that their homeland is incomplete without Kashmir which unmistakably implies that even if the verdict in a plebiscite goes against them they will be unwilling to accept it. A Pakistani leader will angrily refute this statement at present. It will, however, be recognised that the main plank of Pakistan's case is that since the subcontinent was partitioned in 1947 on the basis of religion, Kashmir *ipso facto* belongs to Pakistan.

But 1966 is not 1947. Much water has flown beneath the bridges of the Vitasta during the past nineteen years. The handing over of the Valley to Pakistan merely because its population is mostly Muslim will surely deal a fatal blow to Indian secularism; it is bound to create a chain of reactions aud wide spread disorder in the country. If democratic India goes under the hope of Asia emerging as a progressive free continent will be lost. Thus the importance of the Kashmir issue is not confined to the Indian subcontinent; it has grave Asia-wide import and should cause concern to democratic nations and progressive thinkers all over the world.

### *Change of Policy Needed*

This brings us to the second and the only other solution of the problem. Whatever they may say publicly, at heart the Indian leaders feel that if a plebiscite is held the majority of Kashmiris will vote against India. Unfortunately under the present circumstances this is not far from truth. But though sufficiently disturbing, this probability should not paralyse our thinking. It is most deplorable that the Indian leaders have never cared to inquire why Kashmiris are resentful nor, worse still, they have made any serious and intelligent attempt to improve the situation. Year after year since 1947 conditions have worsened in the State; but it never led to a revision of the manifestly wrong policy of handling the problem ; every time a crisis occurred a heavier dose of the same medicine was administered which had alienated the sympathies of the Kashmiris and caused the deterioration in State affairs. In winter 1964-65, steps were taken in the name of fuller integratiou which exacerbated the feelings of the Muslims and aggravated the situation

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which impatient Pakistan tried to exploit by despatching armed infiltrators to create disorder in the State.

After what has happened during the past nineteen years it is not an easy task to inspire confidence in the resentful Kashmiris but I dare say it is not an impossible one. What is needed to accomplish it is full realization in India that Kashmir cannot stay as a part of the Union if the State people remain dissatisfied and sullen; also as long as extremist Hindu elements within the ruling party in Delhi can have an effective say Kashmir Muslims will not cease to relish anti-India tirades of Pakistan.

There is a belief in certain sections that if some settlement could be arrived at with Sheikh Abdullah things would be all right in the Valley. No doubt Sheikh Sahib is above head and shoulder of any other leader in the Valley but it is inadvisable to lay too much stress on the effectiveness of his role. It is unfair to him to expect that he can perform a miracle.

The trouble stems from the sulkiness and resentment of the Kashmiris which are born of the fears and suspicions entertained by them. If India can do something to allay the fears and restore confidence, the pro-Pakistan opposition will be disarmed and relegated to its proper place. Unfortunately what India has done and continues to do is to adopt measures augmenting the rancour, and thus the climate is generated in which extremism thrives. To be indifferent to the root cause and to try to have a deal with a leader who derives most of his strength from the widespread disaffection is unlikely to lead to success.

Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri while warning Pakistan that Kashmir was not negotiable, publicly stated that the grievances of the Kashmiris were an internal affair and would be attended to. Opening the Gandhi Bhavan in Bangalore on 8 December 1965, President Radhakrishnan declared that while no foreign power had any right to interfere in the affairs of Kashmir, India recognised that if there were any difficulties "it is our duty to settle them to the satisfaction of the people of Kashmir".

While such pious pronouncements remain to be translated into practice, as an aftermath of the Indo-Pakistan clash new

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fears have been added to the other ones intensifying the Muslim distrust.

*New Fears*

After the signing of the Tashkent agreement over 70,000 Muslims who were forced to migrate to Pakistan and Azad Kashmir, had the option to return to their homes because both the Governments had undertaken to restore the situation on their sides of the cease-fire line as it existed on 5 August 1965.

India was prepared to honour and implement this part of the Agreement but Pakistan was unwilling in the beginning to allow the refugees to return probably because the rulers of that land intended to demonstrate to the world that conditions on this side continued to be so bad that the Muslims were afraid to return for resettlement.

The life of the Kashmiris who live in Pakistan or Azad Kashmir is unenviable and those who fled in September 65 were in a wretched state. So, after waiting a little while, whether Pakistan liked it or not, this miserable lot decided to trek back.

Meanwhile, however, militant nationalist sections in the State supported by extremists in India, launched a campaign that Pakistan had trained the refugees during the past months in the art of guerilla warfare and was now prepared to send them back; therefore it would be dangerous to accept them.

With the belligerent and hostile attitude of Pakistan, the suspicion that some spies, saboteurs and guerillas might succeed in finding entrance into Indian territories alongwith the refugees was not entirely unfounded. But on this ground alone there was hardly any justification to deprive thousands of innocent Kashmiris of the right to return to their homeland. It was morally untenable and politically unsound.

But the propaganda of the ultra-nationalists did not fail to achieve its purpose. The Indian Government declined to take back the refugees even after screening them.

When the Home Minister told the Lok Sabha that the migrants were not allowed to return and get resettled, the Kashmiris asked : If innocent Muslims in one part of the State are denied the citizenship right what guarantee is there that in

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future others also will not suffer the same fate under one pretext or another? It is recalled that some politicians have from time to time made proposals to solve Kashmir problem by reducing the majority of the Muslims after resettling Hindu refugees in different parts of the State.

About a lakh of Hindus and Sikhs were rendered homeless when Pakistan armies occupied Chhamb-Jaurian sector of the State. After signing of the Tashkent Declaration these displaced people were resettled in their ancestral homes. The Union and the State Governments spent nearly three crore of rupees on loans to farmers for purchase of bullocks, agricultural implements and construction of houses. The State Muslims acidly point out the contrast in the treatment meted out to the followers of different religions though victims of the same misfortune.

*Autonomy is the Solution*

Kashmiri Muslims are suffering from a loss of sense of belonging. It breeds innumerable suspicions and the fear of insecurity. Any unbiased observer can see that this fear psychology of the Kashmiri is India's real problem and not the accession dispute. One way, perhaps the only way, at present of allaying the fears is to let the Kashmiris manage their own affairs as they like.

India cannot present Kashmir to Pakistan on a platter, but she can restore the autonomy to the State as guranteed by the Constitution-makers in 1950. I believe this will go very far in mollifying the Kashmiris and allaying their fears.

India and Pakistan cannot remain perpetually with daggers drawn against each other; someday the two countries will have to realize that in friendship and amity between close neighbours lies their future progress, welfare and prosperity. Surely, at present Kashmir is a stumbling block in the way of that friendship. But if India can inspire the confidence of the Kashmir people by granting them autonomy, saner elements in Pakistan will find it easier to arrive at an understanding on this dispute and the running sore may be healed.

*Separation of Jammu from Kashmir*

One big hurdle in the path of mollification of the Kashmiris is the opposition from the Dogras to every liberal trend

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in the Union Government's Kashmir policy. The more stringent measures are adopted to curb the powers of the State Government and the civil liberties of the people in the Valley, the happier the Dogras feel about it. Obviously this attitude can in no way restore peace and integrate the Valley with the rest of the country.

Dismayed by the mutual antagonisms and suspicions of the Kashmiris and the Dogras, some well meaning leaders have sought the solution of the problem in separation of the two regions. Dr. Karan Singh, Governor, was reported to have approved in a press interview to the *London Times* in November 1965 a reorganisation of the State on linguistic basis by which Jammu could be amalgamated with Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh taken over by the Centre as Union territory, enabling the Valley to acquire an autonomous status.

The Dogra opposition to democratisation is not entirely motivated by hatred of the Muslim majority ; there are enlightened politicians in the Jammu region who are secular in outlook, love freedom and fight for social justice. But the despotic manner in which the National Conference leaders dealt with the Dogras, as with all other sections of the State people, generated hostility towards the rulers. The Dogras had special reason to feel provoked and frustrated. The termination of the Maharaja's rule dealt a blow at the vested interests many of which were monopolized by them. The National Conference leaders should have made it possible for the Dogras to gradually adjust themselves to the changed circumstances, but there is evidence to show that the new rulers left no chance unutilized to humiliate the Dogras in order to demonstrate their love for the Valley and the Muslims. From becoming free and willing partners in a co-operative commonwealth of the different races and creeds into which Jammu and Kashmir State was expected to be transformed at the termination of the autocratic rule, the Dogras grew into staunch supporters of communalism, anti-progress and disruption. Today they are up in arms against the idea of a special status for the State and are prepared to co-exist with the Kashmiris, if they must, on the condition that the State

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is totally absorbed by India whether the Kashmiris like it or not. Thoughtful people are thus compelled to conclude that a solution may be the division of the State on linguistic basis to enable the Union Government to concede the demands of different regions and fulfil the aspirations of their inhabitants.

On closer examination, however, the division would appear to create new problems that will lead to graver consequences and ultimately harm the larger interests of India and the principles on which Indian Constitution has been founded.

To begin with, the proposed separation of Jammu cannot be effected on linguistic basis as its sponsors fondly hope. The Muslims living in the districts of Doda and Poonch where they happen to be in a majority will almost certainly refuse to be bracketed with Dogra Hindus and prefer to stay with the Valley Muslims. The proposal is thus bound to take a religious complexion.

Justifying the permanent retention of Kashmir with India Congress leaders frequently stress that the Muslim majority State is a symbol of Indian secularism. If Kashmir secedes from the Union, they aver, it will not only damage the basis on which India's Constitution stands but will also start a chain reaction endangering the stability of the country and the security of minorities. As argued earlier the genuineness of the symbol can be established by securing the free will of the State people in support of the accession. And this has been the major preoccupation of the rulers in which success has eluded them till this day. Strenuous efforts continue to be made by progressive elements whether in the Government or outside it, to achieve this aim but if now forces are set in motion to disintegrate the State the endeavours to emotionally integrate it with India will receive a setback.

Most of the modern nations, including India and Pakistan are multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-religious. Democracy to be real and stable has therefore to be erected on the basis of principles which recognise this fact. In pre-independence days the Congress leaders failed to inspire the confidence of the Muslims which led to the partition of the subcontinent; but with undiminished idealism and clear vision, the Constitution-

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makers laid the foundations of free India acknowledging the validity of the fundamental principle that non-Hindus have in every respect equal rights as citizens with the Hindus; there could be no distinction on the basis of religion. The demand of making India a Hindu State was stoutly turned down. Enthused and inspired by this noble achievement of the Indians, the National Conference leaders decided to join India because Kashmir too is a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-racial State. Upholders of secularism are now assiduously labouring to enlist the full support of all sections for the accession. If the attempt succeeds India shall have retrieved her honour and won the battle lost in 1947; it will revolutionise the political trends and the conception of Democratic State in the Afro-Asian countries. But if the Kashmir experiment also ends in failure, it will be a failure of not only a political party but of an ideal and a culture. The movement for reorganisation of the State has to be viewed in the light of these inexorable consequences.

The inescapable inference to be drawn from the demand of reorganisation of Jammu & Kashmir State is that Hindus and Muslims can never unite into one nation, cannot co-operate or co-exist for the attainment of a common ideal. In other words it will be reaffirmation of the two-nation theory and solid support to the Pakistan claim, albeit unwittingly lent. The division will strengthen the pro-Pakistan proclivities of the Kashmiris who cannot be blamed for asking the question: If Dogras see danger in living under a Muslim majority rule though at times of crisis they could look towards the Hindu centre for protection, how can the Kashmiris have peace of mind and trust in future under an overwhelming Hindu majority of India ? Surely there is no satisfactory answer to this. Separation of the two regions is therefore not the way that will ultimately bring about the emotional integration of the Kashmir Valley with India.

If it is in the national interest that the Valley and adjacent Muslim areas should permanently remain with the Union—and the proponents of Jammu's separation are more strident in holding this view than others—it is advisable that the three

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regions of the State—Kashmir Valley, Jammu and Ladakh—should stay together. But it is equally important that the means should be devised to unify them by removing their legitimate grievances and making them free, equal and happy partners in building a democratic state.

For the same reasons which have been advanced here in support of complete autonomy for the entire State, it is incumbent that the Dogras should not only enjoy effective share in the administration at all levels but should also have regional autonomy to handle their local affairs without outside interference. The people of the two regions must learn to respect and defend the sentiments and aspirations of each other; else both will continue to suffer and be unhappy.

### *And Ladakh*

Equally congently could these arguments be applied to one other region, Ladakh, where a different race of men and women, speaking a different language and professing Buddhism, lives. Thus a sensible solution of the problem may be found in giving complete autonomy to the State and within that constitutional framework in allowing local autonomy to Jammu as well as to Ladakh. Having willingly accepted to live under the Muslim majority rule it should be for the Dogras and the Buddhists to come forward with proposals for the autonomy that they would like to enjoy.

### *Federation of Three Units*

Perhaps the best way of satisfying different aspirations is to reorganise the Jammu and Kashmir State as a regional federation as is being done in the case of Assam. The reorganised State will have three constituent units and each of them can have equal status not subordinate to one another. A number of essential subjects of common interest would be assigned to the regional federation leaving the rest of the State functions to the constituent units. These units would have their own legislative assemblies, council of ministers and other democratic institutions.

### *Kashmir in Crucible*

Kashmir is in a crucible and its future complexion is in the process of being built up. History has confronted the

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State people with an unprecedented crisis which also provides them with a rare opportunity. The crisis can end in a disaster or a unique triumph depending upon the attitude that is adopted to meet the situation. Led by demagogues, impatient men or self-seekers who make mountains of mole hills, the State may fall apart and cause the disintegration of the Indian republic bringing ruin to Asian democracy in its wake.

If, on the other hand, better counsels prevail with those who guide public opinion in the three regions, there can be no insurmountable obstacle in the way of building a multi-religious, multi-lingual and multi-racial democratic state with goodwill and cooperation making allowances for each others sentiments and respecting the human dignity of all. It will be an unparalleled achievement of which not only the State people but every Indian will feel proud; for Kashmir will then have defended the principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution and disproved the two-nation theory that continues to sap the vitality of democracy in India and Pakistan.

*Balance Between Two Nationalisms*

It has been repeatedly stressed that Kashmir nationalism has an individuality of its own which is in certain respects different from Indian nationalism. Though on most of the political, economic and social matters the Indians and Kashmiris are in entire agreement, there are a few points mostly emotional and sentimental where their interests clash. It should be the duty of the Kashmir ruling party to boldly express the feelings and urges of the Kashmiris when occasions of this clash arise with the purpose of striking a balance and finding out a reasonable compromise. Unfortunately those leaders who held the reins of the State Government since 1947 completely ignored the people and always looked towards New Delhi for power. This has proved their undoing and the bane of State politics.

*Bold Leadership*

The essential thing needed in Kashmir is a bold person as chief minister who is not only free from communal bias and wedded to the cause of secularism and social democracy but is also able to exert sufficient influence on the thinking of the Kashmiris. It should be obvious that a leader can re-

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main effective only if he has the courage and the freedom to ventilate the grievances of his people and to criticise those who speak or act against the legitimate interests of the Kashmiris. This point needs to be underlined because India has come to grief by ignoring it in the past. Any chief minister who wields little or no genuine influence over the Kashmiris has no use for India and can never be able to deliver goods at the proper time.

Sheikn Abdullah enjoyed considerable influence over the Kashmir Muslims in the pre-independence days. Foolishly, when he came to power in October 1947 he adopted a policy of suppression, overlooked the feelings of the Muslims, ignored their many genuine complaints and lost his popularity ; then through volte face he tried to retrieve the lost position. By using strong arm methods Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed degenerated into a cruel sadist and India was compelled to push him out of office.

When G.M. Sadiq came to power in February 1964, it appeared that, profiting by the experience gained particularly during the Sacred Relic Restoration Movement, the old policy of repression and integration by force would be discarded and the State politics reoriented on liberal, democratic lines. Indeed, for eight months the new experiment was tried with surprisingly satisfactory results. But for reasons discussed earlier reaction raised its ugly head and reasserted itself by the close of the year. Articles 356 and 357 of the Indian Constitution were extended to Kashmir ; National Conference was dissolved and a branch of Congress established in its place ; the names of Sadar-i-Riyast and Prime Minister were rechristened as Governor and Chief Minister respectively ; many high officials were brought from outside the State to replace local men with equal if not better talent. All this was done against the wishes of the Kashmiris. Sadiq and his colleagues yielded to the pressure from New Delhi and reversing the new wise policy virtually ended democratisation by mass arrests and reimposition of restrictions on freedom of expression and assembly. Sadiq now functions as no better spokesman of the Kashmiris than did his two unlucky predecessors.

Sadiq is one of the best and tried secularists, can resist many temptations that degrade public life, and is well infor-

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med ; but if India's Kashmir policy remains unaltered the day may not be far off when he and his colleagues will have become completely ineffective in State politics.

*Education to Change Outlook*

The conversion of Muslim opinion in the Valley is not an impossible task as it appears. It is not suggested that every Kashmiri can be convinced of India's impartiality and sense of justice but there should be no pessimism about changing the outlook of a substantial number if sincere and vigorous efforts are made in this direction. Peculiarities of local culture, historical traditions, pacifist nature and non-communal tolerant temperament of the people and other similar features all point to the desireability of launching an educational campaign.

Pessimists argue that any movement for conversion of Muslim opinion will take decades if not centuries to fructify. It is easily forgotten that nineteen long years have already gone by since the dispute started. Those who were born in 1947 are full grown adults today. Nothing prevented Kashmir rulers from educating this rising generation on the right lines by fostering a secular outlook in them. If most of the youngmen and women have developed a narrow vision, the fault should be laid at the door of those who held absolute power in their hands for the past two decades. Engrossed in suppressing and humiliating opponents the rulers did little to introduce a system of education calculated to rear a generation prone to think rationally and scientifically.

*Dangers Ahead*

As long as Kashmir Muslims remain in unhappy mood, Pakistan will have the temptation to launch adventures for creating disorder in the State.

It will be extremely dangerous to muddle through and think that only by guarding the borders or posting armed forces to quell civic commotions everything will turn right. If no measures are adopted to remove the grievances and fulfil the national aspirations of the Muslims with the purpose of weaning them away from pro-Pakistan inclinations, they may not continue to withhold active support to future saboteurs and infiltrators.

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There are people who believe that if the issue of accession is unilaterally shelved by the Indian Government once and for all, the Kashmiris will consider it a *fait accompli*, cease to think about it and reconcile themselves to the present position. As top leaders of the Kashmir ruling party frequently state : "Keeping accession issue open creates an unsettling effect and the sooner it is closed the better". It is on the basis of such reasoning that Jan Sangh and other Hindu communal sections in India have been clamouring for the abrogation of Article 370. But this view does not take into account several factors that contribute to the situation which is faced in Kashmir.

First, to say that in their helplessness Kashmiris will accept the *fait accompli* after India makes the declaration that accession issue has been shelved, is an immoral proposal ; the idea is revolting ; it is out of tune with the philosophy of democracy and humanism both of which India applauds.

Secondly, India is a progressive republic, engaged in building a socialist pattern of society through democratic methods. She cannot deny for ever the democratic right of free participation to one of its constituent states. In a democracy the right of self-determination is a perpetual right of the people ; otherwise the holding of free general elections would be meaningless. India may reject the plebiscite and turn down U.N. Resolutions considering them time-barred, out-dated and impractical, but India cannot for ever defraud the State people of the constitutional right of *free* general elections And if free elections are held—even as free as in other Indian States—it may be taken for granted that so long as the present conditions prevail the majority of seats will be captured by those unfriendly to India. As a matter of fact the haunting fear of success at the polls of pro-Pakistan candidates is the unspoken reason why fair and impartial elections were not held in the State in 1957 and 1962 and why even in 1967 the central authorities, including Chief Election Commissioner, connived at the malpractices of the ruling party in conducting the general elections.

### *Kashmir and Nagaland*

India is predominently Hindu but it has two regions—Kashmir and Nagaland—where the majority of population is

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non-Hindu, Muslim in the former and Christian in the latter. For various reasons which are beyond the scope of this book to discuss, the minority communities in India have yet to fully imbibe that spirit of Indian Nationalism which comes through confidence in the fair play of the majority, a sense of perfect security and hope of a bright future. Dissatisfaction among the minorities has made Kashmir and Nagaland averse to becoming part of the Indian Republic. The problems of Kashmir and Nagaland with which India is faced present similar difficulties in several respects.

The Naga people, like the Kashmiris, demanded fullest autonomy as an important condition for their homeland to form a part of India. This was denied to them persistently and they were compelled to raise the banner of revolt with the slogan that Nagas are not Indians and want freedom from Indian domination. Indian leaders viewed the recalcitrance of the tiny community with contempt and angrily sent armies to quell the disturbances. For years a battle of attrition was fought in the Naga areas but with diminishing hope of any success. Next, the Indian leaders embarked upon a dual policy of reform and conquest; the administration was liberalised, economy was improved by generous subsidies, education was spread and an elected body was created to advise the Assam Governor for ruling the disturbed areas. When this too failed to achieve the purpose a new State of Nagaland was brought into existence with its own elected legislature and a responsible Government. But the results were no better. The rebel Nagas who had by now become intensely resentful declared that they would accept nothing less than complete freedom. At this stage slumbering India realized the gravity of the situation and the need to deal liberally with a non-Hindu majority area. Negotiations were started with the rebels (called Underground Nagas) through the offices of a Peace Mission sponsored by the Baptist Church. Hostilities were temporarily suspended and a search for an enduring settlement acceptable to both sides started.

A plan envisaging complete autonomy within the framework of Indian Constitution was prepared by the Peace

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Mission which is at present under consideration of both the parties. How anxious the Indian Government is to come to terms and at what price may be ascertained from the statements made by responsible members of the Indian Cabinet.

In their negotiations for a settlement with the Indian Government the Underground Nagas have persistently taken the stand that enforcement of the Indian Constitution would lead to obliteration of the Nagas as a separate ethnic and cultural entity since its civil and criminal laws were repugnant to Naga tradition and genius.

It is reported that during the talks in October 1966 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi told the Underground Naga delegation, that she would not even insist on a settlement being within the framework of the Indian Constitution provided the Naga State remained within the Indian Union.[1] She was of the opinion that their could be scope for adjustment to satisfy the sovereignty of the Nagas.[2]

The Prime Minister was prepared to do her utmost to give Naga people the maximum autonomy ; she offered to get the Indian Constitution amended for the purpose if the Underground Nagas were agreeable to the proposal.[3] On 14 November 1966, Minister of State, Dinesh Singh, told the Lok Sabha that Union Government is prepared to consider minor changes in the Constitution to accommodate the Underground Naga demand for greater autonomy for Naga Land.

Like Nagaland, Kashmir also has peculiar problems because the population of the State is predominently non-Hindu whose traditions, sentiments, emotions and inclinations in certain respects are different from the rest of the Indians. Fortunately the Constitution-makers kept these differences in full view and wisely provided for substantial autonomy to the State leaving it to the Kashmiris to ask for the abrogation of the provision if and when they felt the need for it no longer existed. Regrettably, the healthy process envisaged by the Constitution-

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[1] *Times of India*, New Delhi, dated 12 November 1966 & *Statesman*, New Delhi, dated 23 December 1966.

[2] *Hindustan Times* dated 16 November 1966.

[3] *The Statesman* dated 13 November 1966.

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makers was not allowed to unfold for 19 years and with every change things went from bad to worse.

By eroding the Article 370 and by attempting to merge Kashmir with India against the will of the Kashmiris, Indian Government is making the Valley a fertile ground for the enemies of India on which they can thrive. It is amazing that the Indian leaders should fail to learn a lesson from Nagaland happenings. Perhaps there is no possibility of the Kashmiris resorting to violence however sullen and disgruntled they may be. But it is certain that if there is no change of policy for the better they will harbour intenser feelings of hostility towards India and those who are in power in the State. This will not allow things to come to normal. Restlessness, repression, and dishonest politics will continue to be the fate of the Kashmiris. It will mean frequent frictions, clashes, brawls, and consequent deploying of huge armies all over the State. The accumulated anger is bound to produce upheavals like the one which was witnessed in the winter 1963-64.

*The Way Out*

Is there then no way out? I think that despite what has taken place the hope is not entirely lost; but it will need Himalayan moral courage to pause, review the policy so far pursued, and adopt sensible measures to meet the situation in the light of experience gained both in Kashmir and Nagaland. The idea of retaining Kashmir by force should be abandoned, once and for all. Poet-Historian Kalhana wrote in 1149: "Such is Kashmir the country which may be conquered by the power of moral excellence but not by armed force." These words are as true today as when they were written more than eight hundred years ago.

By having accepted the accession offer of the State, the Congress leaders have renewed their war against the two-nation theory which they lost by agreeing to the partition of India on religious basis. Today there is no foreign power to thwart the efforts of Indian leaders by misguiding the Muslims. If the Muslims are dissatisfied and sullen the responsibility must be laid at the door of the Indian leadership. The Kashmiris have to be convinced that by being citizens of India their religion

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and culture will flourish and they will attain the political and economic freedom for which they have fought and made huge sacrifices in past decades. If India fails in this task it will not be able to retain Kashmir permanently however long it may hold on to the State by other means.

It is idle to oppose the two-nation theory when anxiety dominates the Indian thinking to appease Hindu communalism. In the war of ideals fought on the soil of Kashmir India cannot hope to win so long as Hindu reaction is not effectively curbed. Unfortunately the present policy of the Indian Government in this behalf is characterised by indecision, ambivalence, lack of direction and purpose.

### *Three Views*

In spite of the sweeping generalisations commonly indulged in by superficial observers, there are many shades of political opinion in the Valley which may be categorised under three heads: First, there are those who desire that the State should be held by India through the support of the people if conveniently possible, without it if necessary. This is the general Hindu view with which members of Kashmir ruling party agree. Today Government of India too virtually subscribes to it. The second view diametrically opposed to this is that because Kashmir is predominantly Muslim it belongs to Pakistan for the identical reasons which made the division of the sub-continent imperative. Both of these viewpoints are adequately expressed and well known inside and outside the State.

But there are groups and individuals who adhere to the view held by the Constitution-makers to solve the problem; their's is the rational approach. The rationalist, democratic elements are found in varying numbers in all political parties functioning in the Valley. Kashmir Cultural Society is strongly inclined to advocate this approach. According to it Kashmir should remain secular and maintain those traditions which the people have inherited from their ancestors. The rationalists believe that any change in the present affiliation will not be conducive to the growth of democratic institutions. Renouncement of secularism will mean repudiation of the

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precious heritage and cultural past; it will put the future of freedom in jeopardy. But Indian democracy in practice, if not in theory, is influenced by religious prejudice; the acceptance of demand in principle for total ban on cow slaughter by the Union Government and attempts at forcible imposition of Hindi on non-Hindi speaking people amply illustrate this. Therefore the Kashmiris should have fullest autonomy to manage their internal affairs during a transition period. To formulate a plan of autonomy describing its scope should be entirely the work of freely chosen leaders of the State people. India may offer her advice in its preparation if required to do so, but the Indian Government should be committed to the acceptance of the plan without modification soon after its presentation by the accredited State leaders. The duration of the transition period for which autonomy will be in operation will depend on the good work done by the Indian and Kashmir leaders in their respective spheres of influence to vanquish the communal demon. It can be minimised to ten years or it may be prolonged to a century but in no case should the autonomy be ended without the free consent of the Kashmiris to this effect.

*Liberal Indian Approach.*

It is hopeful that some Indian leaders have begun to grasp that conditions in Kashmir are far from satisfactory and the Union Government's policy to handle the State affairs needs drastic change. C. Rajagopalacharya, former governor-general, thinks that the old fashioned attitude of demanding the property right in a disputed territory should be abandoned and "Kashmir adjusted to post-war doctrines of popular will and democracy". Meeting the argument that Pakistan is a party to the dispute, C. R. advised: "We should demonstrate to Pakistan unmistakeably that the people of Kashmir desire to be affiliated to India. That alone will stop its mouth."[4]

Prof. Ranga, chairman of the Swatantra Party, pointedly asked in a press conference at Jamnagar on 7 January 1967: "When the Indian Government is negotiating with the Nagas it can also negotiate with the Kashmiris. The Congress

4. *Swarajya*, dated 4 September 1965.

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Government has neglected all principles of democracy in Kashmir during the last two decades". Prof. Ranga saw no harm in holding a referendum in Kashmir to decide whether the Kashmiris want provincial autonomy or something else within the framework of the Indian Constitution.[5]

Speaking on 10 January 1967 at a meeting in New Delhi organised to observe the Tashkent Declaration Day, the veteran Sarvodaya leader, J.P. Narayan, asserted that the Kashmir question could be solved only through the initiative of India. He considered any "meaningful talks" with Pakistan unlikely in the immediate future. Therefore he advised India to turn its attention towards Kashmiri people, allow them to decide on a solution and accept their verdict. It would, he thought, then be impossible for Pakistan to question such a solution. Jaya Prakash Narayan suggested that a general election could be used as an occasion for knowing the Kashmiri people's views on their relations with India through a method that was short of a plebiscite and was within the constitutional framework.[6]

In the same meeting G. Ramchandran, representing the Gandhi Peace Foundation, observed that the "sore" of Kashmir would remain unless India declared "from the highest quarter" that it was prepared to have a fresh look at the question. He added: "It was hypocrisy of the worst kind to keep saying that the Kashmir question had been solved."

In the first week of October 1966, a seminar was held in New Delhi at the India Internatioual Centre under the chairmanship of Jaya Prakash Narayan. The participants were men of standing in different walks of life. They believed that "the situation in Kashmir is developing in a manner detrimental to the real interests of India and Kashmir." After a free and frank discussion, the participants declared that "the relations between the State of Jammu and Kashmir and the Union Government within the framework of the Constitution of India should be decided according to the wishes of the people of the State through a free and fair election".

5. *Hindustan Times*, dated 8 January 1967
6. *Hindustan Times*, dated 11 January 1867

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These are happy and encouraging signs but it is well to remember that in the vast ocean of Indian public opinion they are but mere drops. Nevertheless, the basis of sanity has to be broadened and as the Seminar stated "the issue calls for a wider public debate." The Seminar pointed out that the course of action suggested was "likely to minimize international misconceptions in regard to the question of India's policy about Kashmir."[7]

*Tomorrow May be too Late*

By encouraging the democratic view and by supporting the self-respecting patriots who represent the urges and aspirations of the Kashmiris, Indian leaders can create conditions in the Valley which will gradually bring about the emotional integration of the State with the rest of the Union; it would facilitate the task of Congressmen and other pro-India elements in the Valley to persuade their Muslim compatriots to rationally choose what would be conducive to their own welfare and progress—social democracy of India or theocratic-cum-military dictatorship of Pakistan. All other methods are bound to end in failure.

So long as Article 370 is not actually abrogated, a plan can be devised under which Kashmir will enjoy autonomy within the framework of the Indian Constitution. Today this is a possible alternative to repression; tomorrow it may be too late.

7. Among the participants in the Seminar were besides the chairman, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Dr. C. D. Deshmukh, Dr. P. N. Sapru, Col. B. H. Zaidi, General K. M. Cariappa, S. Mulgaokar, Dr. P. S. Lokanathan, B. Shiv Rao, Prem Nath Bazaz, Khushwant Singh, S. P. Godrej, D. L. Mazumdar, S. L. Poplai, Chanchal Sarkar, Syed Mubarak Shah Naqishbandi, Radhakrishna, Sugata Dasgupta, Rajeshwar Patel, R. K. Patil, Poorna Chandra Jain, Sidhraj Dhada, A. C. Sen, Dr. Bimla Prasad, C. C. Desai, Balraj Puri, Narayan Desai, and J. J. Singh, organising secretary. Some others also attended as observers.

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# APPENDICES : CORRESPONDENCE

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# APPENDICES : CORRESPONDENCE

**A. Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and Mahatma Gandhi.**



**B. Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and Jawaharlal Nehru.**



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C. **Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq.**



D. **Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and Others Holding Different Views.**



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# APPENDIX A

## Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and Mahatma Gandhi

Chondhpora
Srinagar (Kashmir)
May 8, 1934

Mahatma M.K. Gandhi
Wardha

Dear Mahatmaji,

Perhaps you remember that I sent you certain papers regarding political disturbances in Kashmir before you had left for the Round Table Conference. Things have assumed such a shape in this country that it has become necessary for me to lay all the facts of this political disturbance before you and to get your advice. I hope you will not mind going through this letter and then benefit me with your opinion.

The native State of Jammu and Kashmir has three provinces: (1) Kashmir, (2) Jammu and (3) the Frontier. These are inhabited respectively by (1) Kashmir Mohammedans and Kashmiri Pandits, (2) Dogras, Rajputs, Depressed Meghs and Mohammedans and (3) Lamaites (Buddhists), Christians and Mohammedans. About 40,000 Sikhs are spread over all the three provinces. There are also a few thousand Punjabis living

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in the State as traders and Government officials, The ruler is a Dogra Rajput of Jammu. The people of Jammu and Kashmir belong to two different races and so Kashmiris look upon the Maharaja as their alien ruler.

The Kashmiri Pandits are the highly educated community in the State and form the intellectual class. One Kashmiri Pandit was instrumental in bringing the Dogra rule to the Valley. Their chief occupation is Government service. They are depressed in the sense that highly educated though they are, they have never risen to high posts in the State and have filled the lower ranks of employment, mostly clerks. The higher ranks are brimful of non-Kashmiris who are in many cases under-educated. It was therefore the Kashmiri Pandit who had so far carried on a campaign in the Press against the autocratic form of Government and the high-handedness of the non-Kashmiri officials in the State. But being in a microscopic minority—Kashmiri Pandits are only 1.6 per cent in the State—the Kashmiri Pandits could not carry on the propaganda with any appreciable success.

The Kashmiri Mussalmans form the bulk of the population here. Being in an overwhelming majority—78 per cent in the State and 93 per cent in Kashmir proper—they are the masses, agriculturists, labourers and others. True, their condition compares favourably with their brother agriculturists in British India but they have legitimate grievances against the Government. I honestly believe that Mohammedans are not adequately represented in the Government Services. There is no doubt that they are themselves mainly responsible for this due to their sloth and lethargy in receiving education and in being indifferent for a long time towards Government service. But it is also true that the Government officials in this State are mostly Hindus. Now that Muslims have begun getting their boys educated in right earnest they are not encouraged and in certain cases they have been positively discouraged.

Jammu and Kashmir is being ruled by a Dogra Rajput whose great grand father was a small chief of Jammu and purchased Kashmir Province from the British Government in 1846. The form of Government has always been and is

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unbridled autocracy. The rulers of the present dynasty have always been found to unduly favour the Rajputs of Jammu which has created heart-burning among other sections of His Highness' subjects. This favouritism and nepotism reached its climax in the regime of the present ruler. Inefficient mediocre men of no abilities and no qualifications were pushed up and Rajputs of worthless character became the heads of most of the departments of the State. The Military was exclusively reserved for them and more than 60 per cent gazetted appointments would go to them. After Rajputs would come non-Kashmiris, chiefly Punjabis who had influence in the higher circles and very little would be left for the poor Kashmiri who is keenly resenting this step-motherly treatment of the Government towards him.

The Kashmiri Pandits are highly educated and would express this resentment but to no effect. A large majority of the Muslims was illiterate and could not even know it, much less express it. But with the passage of time Mohammedans progressed in education and when their educated men saw the disrespectful treatment that they had to face at the hands of the non-Kashmiri officialdom they could not tolerate it. The present movement among Muslims is headed by disgruntled and dissatisfied youths. These educated Muslims began to think and conspire. They spread discontent all over the State. They found a weapon ready at hand, that of exciting the religious fanaticism of the illiterate Muslim masses. A genuine or a false case of disrespect to holy Quran at the hands of a Hindu Government official was made the plank of agitation. Passions of masses once roused could not be pacified. The Muslims of both provinces of Jammu and Kashmir united in this agitation. On the other hand, the Government manned by inefficient officers could not cope with the situation and the administrative machinery went out of joint.

The cry of "religion in danger" was and proved to be an unfortunate element in the Mohammedan agitation. It is true the masses could never have been roused without it and the agitation could not have assumed the gigantic proportions it did, but the consequences were serious. The agitation

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culminated in a Muslim riot in which many innocent Hindus sustained heavy losses of life and property. The movement became communal instead of national and a gap was created between the Hindus and Mohammedans who had lived peacefully among themselves so far. It is true, some of the Mohammedan leaders in the field nowadays have joined the movement to redress the legitimate grievances of their brethren. But it is equally true that some are anxious to be tools in the hands of panislamic leaders of the Punjab like Sir Mohammed Iqbal and others. They see the dreams of wiping out Hindus from Kashmir and establishing a Mohammedan confideracy in Northern India ; and others who were always anxious to meddle in the political affairs of Kashmir have now found an opportunity of fulfilling their long cherished schemes of panislamism. So have also other communally-minded political sections of non-Kashmiri Mohammedans found an opportunity of poking in their nose in the affairs of Kashmir now; they are Qadianis and Ahrars. While all have helped the Mohammedans with money, the last named have sent jathas and filled the jail with their volunteers of which you must be knowing enough.

The condition of Kashmiri Pandits is most unenviable. They are between the devil and the deep sea. Rajputs, as I have said above, have never helped them. They always considered them a subject race and though educationally far advanced than all other communities, Kashmiri Pandits were suppressed by Rajput rulers. Kashmiri Pandits therefore never liked Dogra autocracy and were crying for democratic form of Government. But communal agitation of Muslim leaders has terrified them. It has so unnerved them that, to my dismay, I must admit, many of them have become greater communalists than Muslims now. Muslims distrust Hindus because they think that as the ruler and we have the same religion, we cannot wish the Dogra autocracy to disappear. In this they are not far from being right. Hindus here, like the Anglo-Indians in British India, have in season and out of season sided with the Government to suppress Muslims. Some have even gone to the length of opposing their legitimate demands which do not

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in any way affect them. The Muslims have therefore never extended a hand of co-operation towards us. Their demands are entirely communal and their ways and means are anything but national. They have asked for full fledged democracy but with reservation of seats on communal basis, in not only the suggested Legislative Assembly but also in district boards municipalities, judiciary, ministry and government services.

I think I have given you a fairly good idea of the facts of the case. I want your opinion in the matter, There are two sections of Kashmiri Pandits. One those who want to oppose all the Muslim demands on the assumption that any form of democracy will mean the annihilation of non-Muslims from Kashmir, the fulfilment of the panislamic scheme and the repetition of the recent unhappy happenings because no Muslim appears to be a nationalist. They seem to think that they should act like those Muslims of British India who oppose the Congress demands because in this way they will be helping the Hindu Raj in Kashmir. The second class, to which I also belong, believe in nationalism. We think that after all it is nationalism that will save our country and our community because neither the Hindus nor the Muslims can wipe out the one or the other from the country. We think our nationalism will be a check on the communalism of the Muslims and we can undo their mischief in this way alone. We might be also able to produce nationalists in the Muslim camp by being nationalists ourselves. Secondly, it is not in the interests of the Kashmiri Pandits to be communalists. Situated as we are in many cases in the Mufassil, one or two Kashmiri Pandit homes are living in exclusively Muslim population. Communalism will endanger the lives of those Kashmiri Pandits if bitter feelings are created in both the communities. It is only nationalism that will save such families. Thirdly, we consider it immoral to give up the ideal of a democratic form of government because Muslims have terrified us by their unwise action. I may tell you in passing that almost all the Rajputs of Jammu are communalists because, firstly, they are not numerically weak and can combat Muslims and, secondly, do not like that the rule which is their own and has excessively favoured them should weaken in any way. They threaten the Kashmiri Pandits

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with the communalism of Muslims and want that we should uphold the present Government however degraded it may be.

My humble request to you therefore is that taking all these things into consideration, should we adopt a national programme and give up communalism altogether. If so, won't we be risking our culture, life and property at the hands of pan-islamists. I had so far tried to be a nationalist. While serving on the Grievances Enquiry Commission and the Constitutional Reforms Conference as a non-official member representing Kashmiri Pandits I tried to redress all the legitimate grievances of the Muslims and voted for a representative assembly on a national basis even though the Muslims (the majority community) have persisted in their communal demands. A section of Kashmiri Pandits rebuked me for this attitude and, unhappily enough, that section collared the majority of my community. I was subsequently hooted, dubbed as a traitor and thrown into background after much harassment. I do not know what to do and therefore seek your kind advice.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Wardha
May 15, 1934

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
Chondhpora
SRINAGAR (Kashmir)

Dear friend,

I have gone through your paper. We are sowing as we have reaped. Seeing that Kashmir is predominantly Mussalman it is bound one day to become a Mussalman State. A Hindu prince can therefore only rule by not ruling i.e, by allowing the Mussalmans to do as they like and by abdicating when they are manifestly going wrong. This is the ideal. What is expedient is more than I can judge.

Yours faithfully,
M. K. Gandhi

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# APPENDIX B

## Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and Jawaharlal Nehru.

Chondhpora,
Srinagar (Kashmir)
June 24, 1936.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Anand Bhawan
Allahabad

Dear Panditji,

Very kindly peruse the enclosed letter sent by me to Mahatmaji two years ago and his reply thereto. I have not been able to understand his reply and though I addressed some more letters to him on the subject, no reply has been forthcoming.

It is no consolation to me, a non-Muslim by birth, that Kashmir is one day bound to become a Mussalman State and it is certainly no reply to my query as to what attitude we, Kashmiri Pandits, should adopt in the present struggle that though economic and political in reality, is at present being carried on by Muslims mainly on religious grounds. Nor do I think that Mahatmaji is correct in his prediction. In future

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India, I believe, the Governments and administrative units will not be established on religious principles. It will be a class warfare and not a religious struggle that will be carried on for the political emancipation of the toiling masses in India. Though then the majority of the Ministers and others constituting the future Government and administrative machinery in the Kashmir State may be Muslim by religious faith, the State cannot be a Mussalman State.

Since I wrote this letter to Mahatmaji changes have taken place in the Muslim politics. Though communal still in outlook, signs are not wanting that Muslims are trying to follow Congress programme. But the majority of Kashmiri Pandits are adopting the course that has been chalked out by the reactionary band of British Indian Muslim politicians. In the Legislative Assembly all the Kashmiri Pandit members sided with the Government in getting the Criminal Law Amendment Bill passed and only recently when "Responsible Government Day" was observed on 8th May 1936 throughout the length and breadth of the State, Kashmiri Pandits opposed it, though some other Hindu and Sikh leaders joined the Muslims in this demand. I feel deeply pained at all this but do not know what to do. I firmly believe that the freedom from the shackles of an irresponsible Government is our birthright and we should never rest until we get it. But the majority of Kashmiri Pandits have been led to believe that unless safeguards and weightages are assured the cry for responsible Government should be opposed.

Now certain authoritative statements have been issued by the Muslims telling Hindus that they are prepared to give the same safeguards to non-Muslims in this State as the Hindus in British India are willing to grant to Muslims and other minorities. In one of these statements issued more than two years ago Muslims proposed you as the arbitrator in case the different communities could not arrive at any mutual understanding. No definite reply has been given to these statements by Hindus. On the other hand, they have been crying for safeguards and weightages which they have not been able to formulate so far.

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I shall feel extremely obliged if you would very kindly let me know, not in vague terms as Mahatmaji has done, but definitely what attitude I should adopt in view of all this.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Anand Bhavan,
Allahabad,
July 7,1936.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz,
Chondhpora,
Srinagar, (Kashmir)

Dear Prem Nathji,

I regret the delay in answering your letter of the 24th June. I have been very busy and have also been somewhat unwell.

First of all I must thank you for your letter and the long note attached to it. I have read this with great interest. There was nothing very new in what you have written but your survey of the whole situation in Kashmir has been helpful in making me understand it. Naturally I am greatly interested in developments in Kashmir. This is so because of the larger national issue of which Kashmir forms an integral part. It is also due to my personal tie with Kashmir and my attachment to our old homeland. I regret that my preoccupation with the larger issue comes in the way of my giving more time to the immediate questions affecting Kashmir. But although I cannot help in any way directly, I try to follow happenings there. During the last few years I have been largely cut off from public events owing to my stay in prision and abroad. Yet, broadly speaking, I have tried to remain in touch.

I am not in a position to give any detailed advice as to what should be done in Kashmir now. That would require a closer knowledge of the present situation than I possess now. But the broad outlines are clear enough and I have no doubt in my mind as to the general policy which the people of

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Kashmir should adopt. We must try to understand the basic situation and take a long distance view, and not be overwhelmed by the many petty happenings that seem so big today.

Your own letter and note, I am glad to find, does take into consideration some of these fundamental facts.

It is clear that ultimate fate of Kashmir, as of the other Indian States, is bound up with that of India as a whole. So that the larger struggle for Indian independence governs the situation and the more of less local struggle in Kashmir must be viewed in the light of the Indian struggle. I would go a step further and say that Indian freedom itself is connected intimately with world happenings, but for the moment we need not take them into consideration except to throw light on our own struggle.

Viewing this larger struggle in true perspective, we see that the communal problem in India, big as it seems today, is a passing phenomenon. The real issues are national and economic. You see an identical development in other oppressed countries (Egypt, Syria, Palestine etc.) The religious aspect is going into the background and nationalist aspect is becoming far more important, and behind it, and influencing it, is the economic urge of the hungry and unemployed or partly employed masses and lower middle classes.

In Palestine today the Arabs, both Muslim and Christian are jointly struggling for independence. They are always stressing the fact that theirs is a national strugle and not a religious or a communal one. So also is Syria and Egypt. From this point of view thus the communal question in India recedes into the background, important as it is today. All talk of Panislam and Pakistan is the veriest nonsense. Every single Islamic country has shed this idea and thinks along nationalistic lines. Panislam cannot obviously flourish in north-west India alone. The whole idea is an absurdity but some publicity is given to it by Anglo-Indian newspapers.

Coming to Kashmir I think there can be little doubt that the basic cause underlying all the disturbances in recent years has been economic distress and unemployment, added to resentment at the fact that the state services were monopolised by

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certain groups and classes. There was reason for this resentment but unhappily a strong communal turn was given to the whole movement, chiefly by outsiders. During the disturbances the Kashmiri Pandits suffered greaty and I was deeply grieved to learn of their sufferings. I can well understand that this experience as well as the feeling that they are surrounded by a hostile majority, should have terrified many of them into a kind of alliance with the State Government. But while I understand this, I deplore it, for this is both bad principle and bad policy. The climax of this fatal policy has come when all the Kashmiri Pandit members of the Kashmir Assembly sided with the State Government in getting the Criminal Law Amendment Bill passed, as also when most Kashmiri Pandits opposed the celebration of "Responsible Government Day" on May 8th. This policy seems to me not only most degrading but definitely injurious to the interests of Kashmiri Pandits and by adopting it they are ranging themselves against progressive movements which inevitably will grow, and irritating the vast majority of the population of the State. No special weightage or protection on behalf of the State can possibly protect them against a huge hostile majority.

I cannot conceive of religious or communal States or countries in the future. Therefore, I cannot think in terms of Kashmir as a Muslim State, though inevitably the large population of Muslims there will and should dominate the politics of the country. But this should not mean the suppression in any way of the Hindus or of other non-Muslims there. If the communal demands of any group are analysed it will be clear that they affect only a handful of persons and have little to do with the common interests of the people.

The Kashmiri Pandits are small in numbers but they are far better educated and are highly intelligent. In any progressive movement or radical reforms they are bound to play an important part by virtue of their education and intelligence, provided they do not cut themselves adrift from such movements and changes. State protection cannot do anything for such a small minority except to isolate it from the rest and breed ill will against it. We have in India a very small but highly

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educated minorty, the Parsis. They have made themselves felt wherever they have gone : no special protection could possibly give them this position which they acquired by their own attainments. I am quite clear therefore that the Kashmiri Pandits must revise their present policy and must in future develop political and other contacts with the advanced groups in the country. They should give up their narrow communal outlook and think of their own welfare in terms of the welfare of Kashmir as a whole, that is to say of the great majority of the people of Kashmir. I would advise them not to seek any special protection or weightage or reservation of places in the State service, no special electorates or the like. I understand that the Muslims of Kashmir are offering them the same safeguards as the Muslims might get in British India. This will not make very much difference. They will get far more through goodwill and cooperation with the other communities.

In Egypt many years ago the British Government sought to divide the nationalist ranks by offering special protection to the Christian Copts. But the Copts were wise and they refused this and preferred to side with the nationalist movement and to rely on their Muslim colleagues of this movement. The result has been that they have played an important part in Egypt and have got far more than they would otherwise have done by bargaining or by siding with British imperialism.

I realise fully that the adoption of this policy will be difficult after the Kashmiri Pandits experience of the past few years. Nevertheless, this is the only right policy. I feel also that the time is ripe for this as many of the Muslim leaders in Kashmir are desirous of winning the cooperation of the Hindus.

For the present I am presuming to advise the Hindus regardless of what the reaction of the Muslims might be. It is quite possible that the communal elements amongst the Muslims both in Kashmir and in British India might continue to do mischief. We shall have to face plenty of trouble from all manner of quarters but if we act correctly and far-sightedly we are bound to succeed.

I am convinced in my own mind that Kashmir has a bright future. It has great possibilities of industrial development

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and there is no reason why we should not put an end to the tremendous poverty of her people by developing its resources. But we must look a little ahead for that and not lose ourselves in the petty squabbles of today. And before we can really go ahead we shall have to make big changes politically and otherwise. Let us all work for these and keep the ultimate goal before us. At present, as you know Kashmir is almost under the direct rule of the British Government in India,

Kashmir is very dear to me and I only wish that I could be of greater service to the old country. But I often think of it and my warm wishes go out to those who work for freedom and the betterment of the masses there. In this work, I earnestly trust that the Kashmiri Pandits will take a rightful and prominent share.

I have written at some length. I shall be glad if you will keep me informed of developments in Kashmir. Some time back (on June 18) I sent a letter to you and Mr. S. M. Abdullah in reply to joint letter from you two. I do not know if this reached you.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

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Chondhpora.
Srinagar Kashmir
July 15, 1936

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Anand Bhawan
Allahabad

My dear Panditji,

Many thanks for your letter of the 8th July, the contents of which have relieved me of great distressing thoughts. Not that what you have written in your long letter I did not already believe myself. But the politics of this State in general and that of my own community in particular some times perplexed me so much that I would feel despondent about my aspirations

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and hopes. Naturally also at times human weakness would overcome me and I would begin to doubt my ways and methods. Overwhelmed by the grief born of constant opposition of the majority of Kashmiri Pandits and the narrow mindedness of certain Mohammedan leaders I would feel supportless and darkness would envelop me. You can therefore imagine the magnitude of my happiness when on reading your letter every word in it resounded the echo in my heart.

The truth is that broadly speaking the politics of the Muslims in this State is the politics of independence, of fight against the shackles of an irresponsible and autocratic form of Government, of amelioration of the sad plight of poorest classes living in the land, of struggle against vested interests, against ignorance, against age-old social system in society that the so called great have created in their own interests to put the vast majority of the people under subjection. My only sorrow is that all this is being done at present in the name of Islam and the masses are told that they suffer because they are Mussalmans. This, besides making the outlook of the masses exetrmely communal produces the baneful effect of expliotation of Muslims by their clever and selfish co-religionists.

The politics of Kashmiri Pandits, on the other hand, is the politics of educated unemployment and as one of their chief occupation has been Government service in the past, and as there are absolutely no other avenues of employment in the state, Kashmiri Pandits take up cudgels against everybody who tells them that other communities also should get fair share in the Government services. Not that the whole community lives on Government services. I think not more than two thousand Kashmiri Pandits are so employed but the vocal and influential section among Kashmiri Pandits is comprised of these Government servants. They as well as all those who do not, even after the bitter experience of the past few years, reconcile themselves to the changed circumstances and still look upon Government service as their only source of employment, uphold the worst type of communalism. They have cut adrift the whole community from taking any part in the national movement.

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We have gradually reached a stage where we stand in the position of aliens in our own mother country and look upon all that is going on around us with indifference and even with hostility. As an example I may tell you that it does not perturb us what the land revenue or the customs duty on goods imported or exported are. We would even help the Government directly and indirectly to suppress any agitation that might be started for reducing the land revenue assessments though a good portion of the land is in our possession and thousands of our brethren in the villages are cultivators. But if out of half a dozen appointments in an office we do not get some the whole community would be made to believe that doomsday was near. Much of this might be due to the reaction produced by the activity of communal Muslim leaders. But that all this is there nobody can deny. Such being the case Kashmiri Pandits feel that the only solution is to keep Muslims suppressed in order that if they are not politically conscious we can monopolise the Government services.

Speaking frankly, I hate this politics. I am fully conscious of the difficulties of my own community, of our numerical strength, of our weakness in not being able to apply ourselves to other occupations all atonce, of the degrading unemployment of our educated young men and of the sufferings of those who fell victim to Muslim communal fanaticism. But I am confident that the remedy is not the suppression of the masses but the advancement of our country as a whole.

Like yourself, I believe Kashmir has very bright future and time will come when the potential wealth with which Nature has endowed the Valley will be utilised for the benefit of its inhabitants by a sympathetic responsible Government. If Kashmiri Pandits are wise enough to remain in the forefront of this struggle for independence, as their education and intelligence entitles them but where unfortunately they are not at present, they will not only be compensated for their lost clerkships but they will profit very greatly. In the beginning of the Kashmir movement I worked among Pandits as President of the Sanatan Dharm Youngmen's Association. They fully appreciated my work and as a mark of recognition of my

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services elected me as their representative to sit on the Grievances Enquiry Commission and the Constitutional Reforms Conference which the Government formed soon after the Muslim rising in 1931. But with the publication of the report of that Commission my views shocked Kashmiri Pandits; for I agreed to redressing all the legitimate grievances of the Muslims and to giving them a fair share in Government services. This was the beginning of their disillusionment as well as mine. Slowly but surely, I found my way into the politics of the masses and to tell you the truth, but for this communal outlook I find myself in my element now when I work among Muslims as by temperament and nature I love independence and have the greatest desire to work for the downtrodden to whatever faith or creed they belong. Even after knowing about the untold atrocities that were perpetrated by the unruly Muslim hooligans at Vicharnag, Maharajganj and Mirpur, I do not want to join hands, as most Kashmiri Pandits would like me to do, with the British Imperialism or even the irresponsible Hindu Raj to crush the rising spirit of independence among the masses in this country. Goodness. alone knows how dearly I have to pay for this. But I do not complain, I do not murmur, because I derive a pleasure and satisfaction in doing this that the greatest riches on earth would not give.

What pains me most is the narrow-mindedness of certain Muslim leaders who, while talking about independence, responsible government and the like, would not hesitate to kick up a row on such petty matters as a very small portion of land or an appointment of non-Muslim clerk or peon in this office or that. In season and out of season, these amiable gentlemen would abuse the whole Pandit community for faults done by individuals and excite the masses in the name of religion. It appears these fellows would not tolerate the presence of any non-Muslim religious places or non-Muslim employees in the Government service and yet want a Government on the pattern of a full-fledged democracy in the world. When such preachers go into the mufassil to preach their gospel of "freedom" it naturally terrifies the insignificant Hindu population there. Why this galls me more than Hindu communalism is that this kind of

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nonsense renders the association of a non-Muslim with the cause of Muslim masses more difficult.

I believe all this is due to the existence of communal organisations and communal electorate here. We have not a single non-communal or national organisation in Kashmir. Muslims and Hindus live in such water-tight compartments that they posses no knowledge of each other's point of view. But in fairness to them I must tell you that there are a few Pandit youngmen like myself who hate the present Pandit politics and there are Muslim leaders whose outlook is nationalistic. In order to organise these elements in both the communities we have now started a Youth League with the object of fighting by all legitimate means for the realisation of responsible government and to work for the economic, social and cultural upliftment of the people. The members of the League are expected to have full faith in the equality of all people living in the State and in there being no distinction between young men or young women on the basis of religious beliefs they profess. I expect we can have energetic and sincere workers from both the communities to work as members of this League.

Knowing fully well what preoccupations you have and how much busy you must be now a days I feel sorry to trouble you like this with such long letters. But as both of us are interested in Kashmir politics and the independence movement here as an integral part of that bigger struggle for the emancipation of India, I take this liberty of keeping you fully informed of the developments in this country. I also hope that you will allow me to publish this correspondence when and if I feel necessity of doing so.

We were disappointed to get your reply in the nagative to the joint letter from Mr. S. M. Abdullah and myself inviting you to this land. We did, however, broadcast your message of greetings to the people of Kashmir as desired.

Thanking you again for your letter and with all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz.

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Anand Bhavan,
Allahabad,
August 9, 1936.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
Chondhpora
SRINAGAR (Kashmir)

My dear Prem Nathji,

Your letter of the 15th July came here during my absence in Sind. I returned a few days ago after a long tour.

I appreciate your difficulties. To a greater or lesser extent we have to face similar difficulties everywhere. But we must stick to principles and try to look at the real problem. Any other course would be short-sighted and wanting in intellectual integrity. It would also be doomed to ultimate failure.

I am glad to learnt that a "Youth League" has been started. I hope this will keep the long view before it and work for the full freedom of all people in the State—men as well as women. It is folly to imagine that a handful of middle class people will prosper for long if the whole foundation of the State rests on poverty-stricken masses.

You are at liberty to publish our correspondence if you so desire it.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave,
New Delhi-16.
June 29, 1962.

Shri Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

Possibly you know that after a long absence of nearly fifteen years from Kashmir I visited the Valley early this month for three weeks with the purpose of studying the political, economic and social developments during the past years. I travelled a good deal and met hundreds of public workers and a larger number of common men and women in Srinagar, in important

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towns and in a few villages in the countryside. I contacted prominent Hindu and Muslim leaders and politicians of different parties and diverse shades of opinion to hear their views on current topics and the problems with which the State is confronted. I interviewed the Cabinet Ministers and other National Conference leaders to have long talks with them. I took opportunity to exchange ideas with traders and shopkeepers on the condition of business in the country. These studies and discussions have brought me to certain happy and not-so-happy conclusions which I want to place before you for your consideration.

There can bo no gainsaying the fact that Kashmir has registered progress in various directions after the termination of Dogra rule. First and foremost, it is gratifying to see that literacy is rapidly spreading to the remotest corners of the Valley. The countryside is dotted with primary schools for boys and girls. I found even the illiterate parents anxious to get their children educated. Many middle and high schools have been started mostly in spacious, newly constructed buildings within an easy reach of the surrounding villages where boys and girls desirous of learning can conveniently study free of any charge. It is a pleasant sight to see flocks of students dressed in uniforms and beaming with joy going to schools in the morning throughout the Valley.

From the early times in Kashmir history women have waged a heroic struggle to maintain their freedom and resisted the imposition of purdah. It is delightful to find that the Muslim women of the Valley are walking in the footsetps of their forbears and have refused to be influenced by extraneous forces. Whether in the bazars of the city and towns or on the fields in the villages I saw most women, both illiterate and educated, walking and talking vigorously and uninhibited as they do nowhere in this subcontinent.

Many new metalled and kucha roads in addition to the old ones are criss-crossing the entire State. There is no town and hardly any big village which is not connected with the capital by road. A transport system has been established which carries thousands of passengers everyday from one part of the State to the other. What is more, the transport is

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cheap, efficient and regular. This would have been inconceiveable in pre-1947 days.

I found business brisker than ever before. Hundreds of new concerns have cropped up. New markets to accommodate business houses have been built on modern lines. Shops in Srinagar and muffasil towns are full of consumer and luxury goods which is an indication of the prosperity that the people enjoy.

Never before had I seen such swarms of trourists going through the streets of Srinagar, Pahalgam, Gulmarg and other health resorts as I witnessed this time. In the evenings especially I watched the markets with customers making purchases.

There is some improvement in the insaintary conditions of the older parts of Srinagar and other big towns like Baramulla and Anant Nag. Though the filth and squalor continue to stink, roads have been widened at places and attention is paid to imporve the unhygienic surroundings. The new colonies and some of the public buildings that have been constructed are pleasing and impressive. Much more no doubt remains to be done in this direction but the progress already achieved cannot be ignored or minimised.

How far the land and other reforms effected legally and administratively by the Government have benefitted the peasantry was difficult to assess. There was no unanimity on this point among the people I met. There was considerable divergence in the opinions of the peasants themselves in all parts of the Valley. But considering all matters relevent to this subject and comparing the peasant economy under the Dogra rule with the condition obtaining today, I do not think it would be wrong to judge that there has been a rise in the standard of living and peasants now are better fed and better clothed than previously. They are no longer harassed and only expected to pay rents and taxes to the Government and *rasum* to the State officials. The Government owns a responsibility towards them which it tries to discharge as best it can.

About industrialisation of Kashmir I have to say that it is yet in its infancy. The facts and figures obtainable from official and non-official sources did not convince me that the

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plants raised in the public sector have yielded any profit ; indeed, some people contest that they are a drain on the public exchequer. But many small scale industries established privately with Government subsidy by local entrepreneurs are successfully run and give employment to hundreds of landless peasants in the *muffasil* and workers in the city.

Although critics frequently assert with cogent reasoning that much more could have been accomplished with the huge finances made available by the Union Government, there is little doubt that Kashmir has, economically speaking, made an advance since 1947 when the big political change occurred in the State administration.

But, despite this change for the better, I found people generally unhappy and restless. I heard virtually every one I met complaining of unprecedented corruption in the administration from top to bottom. Some honourable exceptions are no doubt reported but they are said to be rare and only stressed to prove the rule. It was obviously very difficult for me within the short time at my disposal, to ascertain the veracity of the charge but when I mentioned it to some of the Ministers they did not seriously refute it : even Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed reluctantly admitted that the corruption had increased in certain spheres adding that in an expanding economy when huge sums had to be spent on public works it could not be helped. He stoutly denied that high ranking officers, particularly police officers, were corrupt. But I have been assured by men whose impartiality and honesty I have no reason to doubt, that under the Maharaja's rule there was much less corruption among officials than it exists at present.

A more serious grievance is about the suppression of free public opinion either through the Press or on the platform. Having been a working journalist for over thirtyfive years of which more than twenty were lived in the Valley, I can state without fear of contradiction that the Srinagar Press has deteriorated since 1947. Under the Dogra rule at least a few journals had acquired independence and courage to critically examine the doings of the administration and freely comment on the policies of the Government. Such journals have become

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non-existent under the present regime. Nor can anybody dare pass remarks, however justified, from a public platform criticising the actions of certain dignitaries especially the Prime Minister of Kashmir. Baskhi Ghulam Mohammed pointed out to me that there were no special laws on the Statute Book which forbade freedom of expression ; he could not, he added, create bold and honest journalists or independent critics of the Government. That may be partly correct ; but the congenial atmosphere for the growth of free expression of opinions which was present to a considerable extent in per-1947 days has disappeared. Through violence and use of strong arm by riff raff supporters of the regime that healthy atmosphere has been by degrees smothered making it impossible for intelligent, self-respecting and free-thinking people to ventilate their inner feelings. This is very lamentable to say the least. For, lack of genuine public opinion harms the people no less than it does the Government. In the absence of an independent Press and critical public opinion the officials and non-officials have to depend for news on wild rumours and wilder commentaries on the doings of the authorities. Hardly a day passes in the Valley when a rumour or two concerning vital public interests are not spread and believed by the people to be true, at any rate, until fresh rumours replace them.

As a result of the suppression, people generally feel frustrated and demoralised. Because of the enslavement and more or less tyrannical foreign rule for centuries, the Kashmiris had been compelled to imbibe certain hateful vices of which simulation and lying were the most reprehensible. Fortunately, the revolution of 1931 in the State had effected a healthy social change and the Kashmiri had begun to recover his moral self. As one closely associated with both the communities I had happily witnessed from 1931 to 1947 our compatriots raising their heads and trying to gradually stand erect and manfully face a bully and a tyrant. It was heart-rending to observe that the wholesome process has come to an end and people have indiscernibly gone back to the old unbecoming methods of saving their skin. I believe this is the greatest loss that the Kashmiris have suffered in the new era.

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During my long absence, I had heard contradictory reports about the attitude of the State Muslims towards the accession dispute and I wanted to arrive at the truth by personal enquiries in the Valley. It is no exaggeration to say that, by and large, the Kashmir Muslims are pro-Pakistan. This statement might annoy you but it would not be honest to conceal it. Why, in spite of the undoubted economic and social progress under the fostering care of the Indian Government, they are pro-Pakistan needs a thorough investigation.

Kashmir Muslims realise that India has been generous to them and they were never so well off economically in the past as they are today; they also know that their representation in State services has speedily been pushed up despite the vehement protests of the non-Muslims. Though the ultra-communalist elements never tire of impressing upon them that under Pakistan they would have been much better, the politically mature sections are fully aware of the anti-democratic tendencies in Pakistan and the mess that has been made of Azad Kashmir with the concurrence of the Pakistan authorities. It is well-known in the Valley that hundreds of Kashmiris, staunch supporters of Pakistan a few years ago, pine to return to the Valley in order to escape the poverty and lawlessness in the so-called Azad Kashmir. Nevertheless, I found paradoxically enough, most Kashmiris in the Valley still yearing for the day when the State or at least the Valley accedes to Pakistan. I consider it to be a consequence of desperation.

Normally, the issue of accession carries little interest for the ignorant peasants in the interior of the Valley who form majority of the population ; they cannot give any coherent views on the subject. The politically conscious Muslims talk passionately about it and make no attempt to hide their opinion when talking to one in whom they can safely confide.

It was, however, significant to come across many sincere and thoughtful Muslims in Srinagar and other towns with no party affiliations, who stated emphatically that the accession issue would have been forgotten by now in view of the growing prosperity of the country if, firstly the Union Government had

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kept a vigilant eye on the ways of expenditure of the enormous sums that were given to the State and had created an incorruptible set-up to make the best use of the money. Secondly, they bewailed the ubridled power which the present Kashmir Government enjoyed and wielded despotically to deal with people especially the opponents of the regime. Thirdly, they insisted that the civil liberties of the people should have been respected much more in Kashmir than in the rest of India ; when the human and political rights of people are ruthlessly violated by legal and illegal means, the fair critics add, the Kashmir Muslim looks towards Pakistan as a remedy for the cure of his ills or to heal his wounds.

The Muslims alone are not frustrated and sullen; it was surprising to learn that the Pandit community is also resentful and every individual member of the community I met accused Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed for his partiality, unfairness and, worse still, for spreading communal virus. It is notable that not a few among the Pandits ruefully recalled the days of Sheikh Abdullah's regime when, they said, better justice was administered and the policy of non-interference in departmental work was pursued. One constantly talked-of complaint of the disgruntled Pandits is, as of yore, that they do not get ample share in State services and other profit-giving works in the gift of the Government. When I mentioned this to Bakshi Sahib he gave me a copy of a statement containing facts and figures to prove that the Pandits are getting much more than their numbers entitle them to have. This, I believe, is not far from the truth. It can be assaverated that Pandits were never so well represented, so far as State services are concerned, as they are today. The National Conference Government has been liberal to them.

Attempting to understand the real mind of the Pandits, I observed that what they in fact dislike is the speedy growth of Muslim representation in the State services; the Pandits fail to realize that this is inevitable in the changed national and international circumstances. I have been one of those non-Muslims who always believed since the first outbreak of political disturbances in 1931, that for the smooth, peaceful and

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healthy development of State politics a larger number of Muslims should be recruited in the services. It is, therefore, gratifying to note that this end is being progressively achieved though the methods often employed are not above reproach.

The genuine grievance of the Kahsmiri Pandits is occasioned, in my opinion, by the absence of rule of law in different spheres of administration. This grievance, however, is not confined to Pandits and is commonly vioced by all classes and sections of the people in the Valley and, I presume, in all parts of the State. The share that is alloted to the Pandits in the services and, indeed, in any branch of public works, does not go by merit but by jobbery. The undeserved supporters of the ruling party come first and unqualified kinsmen or friends of the influential National Conference leaders come next. The man or woman with merit is elbowed out. This causes much heart-burning.

One problem worrying the poorer classes of the people and disconcerting to the Government is the ever-rising prices of the essential commodities of life. Kashmir was famed for the abundance and cheapness of fruits, vegetables, milk and even food grains. Those days are past let us hope not for ever. Thanks to the special subsidy granted by the Centre to put down the price of rice, the Kashmiris can still have their staple diet at a reasonable price. But other necessities of life are available at higher prices than we get them in Delhi. Fresh milk is a rare commodity ; imagine the Kashmiris forced to consume tinned dry stuff in place of cows fragrant milk.

It would appear that certain laws, rules and regulations in Kashmir are made for breach and not for observance. Scores of cases were brought to my notice when individuals were peremptorily deprived of their rights at the behests of the men in power,

Bakshi Sahib is reported to be the worst sinner in this respect, He is the final authority and he frequently behaves as if he is a law unto himself. There is an expression often used by the Kashmiris; "Bakshi Sahib Ki Mehrbani" which means that if laws and rules do not help in the achievement of one's

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purpose a word from Bakshi Sahib can. The intensity of ill-feeling caused can be guessed when it is known that there is no level at which Bakshi Sahib does not interfere. Appointment of even lowest paid officials and admission into colleges and technical institutes are made under his direction and with his approval.

Because of the frustration, demoralisation and resentment stated above, the people as a whole did not appear to me to be happy. I found most of them restless. In these circumstances the Pakistan propaganda and the debates in the Security Council carry sufficient weight and make the Kashmiris uncertain about their future.

Although on the whole the people continue to live in friendship and maintain the traditional communal harmony and concord especially in the countryside, I was sorry to note that in certain sections of educated Hindus and Muslims in the city and towns aggressive communalism is raising its vicious head to the dismay of the advocates of secularism and the builders of democratic set-up.

On the fundamental issues facing the country I found the members of the State Government divided. The decisions of the Cabinet do not carry the unanimous support of all. The choking atmosphere in the Valley is intensely disliked by some while others are complacent about the state of affairs as it exists. For one reason or another every Minister is ill at ease in his seat of power.

It is unsurprising that many people should look increasingly towards Sheikh Abdullah for deliverance. Long incarceration would have in any case earned him some of the old popularity. But the short comings of the present Government have compelled the people to remember him with respect. He is no longer unpopular even among some sections of the Hindus and the Sikhs. People seem to have almost forgotten his faults and foibles and the blunders he committed during the days of power. To the Muslims he has again become a symbol of national independence.

In my talks with hundreds of politically conscious workers, I have formed an impression that if an understanding is arrived at with Sheikh Abdullah much of the tension in the Valley

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will abate, the accession issue will cease to have the significance and importance it has at present.

I do not know how far Sheikh Abdullah is prepared to adapt himself to the changed conditions. But knowing him, as I do, I believe he is often pre-eminently reasonable and quite receptive to sane advice; only he should not be rubbed on the wrong side by those who approach him for an honourable settlement.

Some known and reliable supporters of Sheikh Abdullah who are regarded as his close confidents told me that for some time he had been reconsidering his position and that if a sympathetic approach is made to him by a friendly person there is good reason to believe that he will be prepared to enter into an understanding with the Union Government which may be honourable to all concerned. Let me hasten to add that my informants are, as I am, strongly of the view that ultimately the future of Kashmir shall have to be forged by the people themselves. We do not at all propose to surrender the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris but we believe it shall have to be exercised in a different setting without creating any ill will or disturbing the peace of the subcontinent. We believe the freely expressed will of the people alone can bring an abiding solution of the Kashmir problem. To this, I think, no democrat will have any objection. Making this principle as a firm basis of an understanding it is not impossible to utilise the services of Sheikh Abdullah for building of a democratic social structure in Kashmir.

In this connectian I was agreeably surprised to note that if an understanding with Sheikh Abdullah becomes possible even such fanatic pro-Pakistan elements as led by Mr. Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Kara, President Kashmir Political Conference, may be amenable to reason and contribute their assistance to the solution of the Kashmir problem acceptable to India.

In my talks with Mr. G. M. Sadiq, Education Minister, it was suggested to me by him that I should meet Sheikh Abdullah and try to arrive at such an agreement. Mr. Sadiq recalled the days when both of us successfully persuaded Sheikh Abdullah to convert the Muslim Conference into the National

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Conference. One other member of the Cabinet too supported this move. Though I have not met Sheikh Sahib for a pretty long time and have had various differences with him while he was in office, I was prepared to undertake the mission. Bakshi Sahib was, however, reluctant to grant me the required permission to meet Sheikh Abdullah and the idea had to be dropped, at any rate for the time being.

It is my considered view that so long as Sheikh Abdullah is behind the bars political conditions in Kashmir cannot return to normal, the Pakistan slogan will continue to have an appeal and the element of instability in life cannot be eliminated.

Summarising my findings finally I might say that the situation in Kashmir is fraught with grave consequences but is not beyond the power of wise statesmanship to control it.

Since you are making another trip to Srinagar during the next few days I thought of sending you this brief report for your perusal and consideration.

If you need it I can make personally or in writing a fuller report of what I saw in the Valley during the days of my visit.
With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Pahalgam (Kashmir)
July 6, 1962

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz,
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

Dear Shri Bazaz,

I have received your letter of the 29th June giving your impressions of a visit to Kashmir. I have read your long letter with interest.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
July 18, 1962

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 6th instant and am glad to learn that you read my long letter containing impressions of my Kashmir tour with interest. I do not know whether you have had leisure to consider the points raised by me and if you contemplate taking any action to remove the genuine grievances of the Kashmir people; but as I deem it essential for the building of a democratic structure in the State that the measures are adopted to end frustration and demoralisation which have, in my opinion, overwhelmed the people, I take once again the liberty of addressing a letter to you.

That the Kashmir Government is earnest in its endeavours to improve the wretched condition of the poverty-stricken and backward classes and to reconstruct the economic and social life of the people on the whole, only those can doubt whose minds are closed. I confess my views have undergone a change in certain respects after my recent visit to the Valley. No impartial critic can deny that in its efforts the Government has already achieved an appreciable success. At the same time, however, it cannot escape the eye of a keen observer that in implementing the plans of development the Government is not receiving full co-operation of the people and therefore the results are not commensurate with the endeavours made or the money spent on the welfare projects.

I do not hesitate to admit that it is easy to blame the authorities, as is being commonly done in Kashmir, for their sins of omission and commission; it is easier still to find fault with everything that the Government does. But no fair-minded person can help feeling that the Kashmir Government is functioning under serious handicaps mostly psychological in nature, and its policies and actions can justly be judged only by keeping this fact constantly in view.

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Wherever I went in the Valley I found that despite the seeming tranquillity people are passing through a period of nerve-raking tension and vague uncertainty which appears to have become interminable with the result that normalcy in the real sense does not return and no smooth working is possible in different spheres of social life; there is little likelihood of national institutions being fostered and grown in the country so long as the present conditions last.

The main cause of vexation alike for the Government and the people is the unresolved accession issue. On the surface it seems to be a past story as some of the ruling party men publicly assert and want the world to believe, but I discovered to my dismay during the course of my close study that there is hardly a person in the State at any rate among the politically conscious sections, who is not perturbed by its existence. Despite what wishful thinkers may say the State politics is dominated by this question and there is no aspect of life in Kashmir which is not affected by it. It would be courting self-deception to conceal this fact and dangerous to run away from it.

I do not want to dwell at length upon the many-sided evil which the prolongation of the accession issue produces; it will make this letter too long. Suffice it to say that the mutual suspicions which are a marked characteristic of life in Kashmir are an unwholesome outcome of the issue. If the Hindus distrust the Muslims and vice versa, it is because of it; if the Kashmiris consider themselves as something different from the Indians the reason is the unsolved accession dispute; and if the Government is compelled to curtail civil liberties and resort to repressive methods in dealing with the opponents the reason is to be sought nowhere else but in the dispute. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed's insistence on maintaining the separate identity of Kashmir despite his undoubted desire for national integration may be easily traced to it. As a matter of fact, the accession dispute is proving a bane of progress in the State.

It is therefore difficult to believe that there can be any real advance in Kashmir until somehow or other the accession dispute is ended or otherwise dealt with.

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Unfortunately it is becoming increasingly clear that the Security Council has failed to produce any formula acceptable to India and Pakistan which could settle the issue. Nor does is appear to be feasible that direct negotiations or talks between the two countries can bring forth any better result because both the parties have adopted positions mutually exclusive with no common ground on which to base an agreement.

Pondering over this situation while in Kashmir, I arrived at the conclusion that the issue can be disposed of, if at all, by the Kashmiris themselves. My discussions and studies in the Valley have confirmed me in this finding. I have already told you that the Kashmiris realise that they are making steady progress economically. But they feel sore primarily on account of the loss of fundamental rights and civil liberties and the prevalence of hooligan element in public life. The suffocating political atmosphere in the country is making them desperate. If this by-no-means-an-unfounded grievance could be redressed I think it would not be long before normalcy could be restored and people made happy and co-operative in their attitude.

Now I must frankly State that the Kashmir Government is in no mood to accede to the wishes of the people in this respect ; at least some of the more powerful members in the State Cabinet believe that doing so would afford latitude to the hostile elements to indulge in subversive activities thereby endangering the security of the State and stability of the country. This policy has therefore been tenaciously pursued for the past fifteen years and the day does not seem near when it may be changed. It is not realized that through the enforcement of this policy the Government is progressively alienating the sympathies of the people and generating tremendous ill-will against India though outwardly it may appear that there is general satisfaction and nothing to worry about.

Every Indian patriot ardently desires the accession issue to be shelved and forgotten, especially by the Kashmiris. The State people can be expected to forget it only when they are satisfied with the doings of the present regime and are reasonably happy. So far as the economic and social life of the

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Kashmiris is concerned I have no doubt they are grateful to India for the little progress they have made ; they hope to be more prosperous in the near future ; but political persecution and suppression of free opinion coupled with harassment by goonda elements is, besides making them sullen and resentful, neutralising the good effects of the benevolent deeds of the Union Government. Whenever a talk of economic welfare plans follows political polemics even many sensible Kashmiris would stridently deny that there has been any improvement in the wretched condition of the masses. The wounds inflicted by the repressive policy remind the Kashmirs that their future is yet unsettled and they begin hopefully to look towards Pakistan. Thus the purpose of the policy of suppression is defeated and instead of putting unfriendly elements under check and control, the Government is only strengthening hostility and subversion in the State. Far from being forgotten, the accession issue remains fresh in the minds of the people creating tension, uncertainty and unhappiness.

Thus by adopting and doggedly pursuing this policy we are caught in a vicious circle.

As is well-known Kashmir has produced intellectual stalwarts is bygone days. One of our great aspirations has been to resurrect cultural atmosphere enabling local artists to freely indulge in acts of creativity. But frightened people cannot be mentally alert or intellectually fertile. It is not surprising that since 1947 the Kashmiris have contributed almost nothing to any branch of literature which may be considered original or outstanding. Kashmiri has been graciously recognised as one of the national languages in the Indian Constitution but has the extra-ordinary grant of the honoured place improved its literary importance in any way ? Kashmir, the ancient seat of learning, is still passing through the deep shadows of medieval darkness when despots enchaining the souls of the people snapped their links with the cultural past.

The main objective of the national struggle in Kashmir has been the establishment of a democratic setup through which people can expect social justice and cultural development which was denied to them for centuries. We are little interes-

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ted in the issue of affiliation of our homeland to this or that country. History has thrust the accession dispute on us against our will and we intensely desire to get rid of it as early as we can.

I fully understand that the problem is ticklish and the situation in the Valley extremely delicate. It is easy to sermonise and gratuitously offer advice to the Government which is functioning under obvious handicaps. But if we are determined that Kashmir should march hand in hand with the rest of the country in building a democratic society, the vicious circle shall have to be broken ; courage has to be taken in both hands to face the grave situation and remedy it.

For fifteen years a certain definitive policy has been unswervingly pursued in the hope that the accession issue if not solved will go to the background, normalcy will return and civil liberties of the people restored. More than a score arbitrary laws (Enemy Agents Act, Security Act, Preventive Detention Act etc.), Rules and Notifications peculiar to Kashmir and operating nowhere else in India, have been in force during this period arming the executive with unlimited powers to indiscriminately torture people and make them loyal to India. As has happened at all times and in all places governed by such draconian measures, innocent people have suffered along with the suspects, the former in a much larger number. Fifteen years is quite a long period to give a trial to a government policy. It is significant that not a single repressive enactment professedly promulgated to meet a national emergency has been withdrawn or amended to soften its rigours. In fact, fresh rules and orders are added every year to the old ones to fortify the policy. Only the other day (on July 5) a notification was issued declaring that the "Kashmir Government servants who are reasonably suspected to be engaged in subversive activities or associated with those engaged in subversive activities will be compulsorily retired from Government service." The Notification seeks to protect the security of the State. Nevertheless, it is an eloquent testimony that the repressive policy has failed to enlist the willing loyalty of the educated classes and the co-operation of the people. If any one

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thinks that the time for liberalisation of the policy will come when Pakistan is out of the way, permit me to point out that in that case we shall have to wait till the Greek Calends.

I submit that it is time this barren policy is abandoned and the alternative of a liberal policy is given a trial. Let the Union Government be as generous and large hearted politically as it has been in the economic fields. I have no doubt in my mind that the change will produce better results. How this can be done is another matter and if you desire me to submit suggestions and proposals for the purpose I can surely do so.

Whilst on the subject of civil liberties, I would like to reiterate my suggestion about an understanding with Sheikh Abdullah. If it is true that he has been reconsidering the political situation in the State and there is a possibility of an agreement with him which may be honourable for all concerned and in no way anti-democratic, the opportunity should not be lost. In any case, there is no harm in permitting some suitable person to make an approach and find out the truth. If Sheikh Sahib remains irreconcileable and impervious to reason, which I hope he will not be, the matter will rest where it is. But I have sufficient and substantial reasons to believe that in the changed circumstances, he will not fail his people and will willingly offer his talents and labours for building a free democratic order in his homeland.

Restoration of civil liberties and free expression of opinion is, no doubt, of primary importance in gaining voluntary support of the people, but I think other matters of lesser importance, lesser only by comparison, cannot be overlooked. In conducting the affairs of the State at all levels, Rule of Law should have supremacy without which even the elementary stages of democratic life are not possible to establish. Not only should the members of the Government, dignitaries of the ruling party and high officials of the State without exception be compelled to strictly follow the laws, rules and regulations in force, but the strong arm methods employed by unruly elements among the supporters of the National Conference with the connivance of their bosses should also be ruthlessly put down.

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There is a general belief that elections in the State are rigged and the supervision of the Indian Election Commissioner has made no difference. When I was in Srinagar the means adopted by the ruling party to win a bye-election had assumed the proportions of a scandal. This impression needs to be removed.

With the mollification of the State people in general and all important elements in Kashmir politics in particular, I think the accession issue will cease to overwhelm the common mind and may be considered to have been virtually disposed of.

Indubitably, interested quarters will not give up their stand; nor can we shut up all mouths; some will continue to raise the known slogans. But when the preponderant majority of Kashmiris is happy and satisfied with nothing important to complain about they will not be receptive to false cries, and appeals to keep the accession issue alive will fall on deaf ears.

While discussing the question of denial of civil liberties with Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed at his residence in Srinagar, he vehemently held that in no case would he tolerate any one in the State who supported accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. For such people, he added, there would be no liberty, they would be crushed. I rejoined politely that no democrat could relish this attitude of the head of the government. Rather than threaten any individual with the forfeiture of his liberty, the better course would be to create such conditions in the State that pro-Pakistan elements will find little response to their subversive slogans and people will voluntarily refuse to hear them. Bakshi Sahib rediculed this view and contemptuously retorted that it was an utopian aim impossible to attain. Nevertheless, I believe that after the failure of the repressive policy this course alone is indicated by wise statesmanship and I implore you to give it a trial.

In Kashmir, as outside the State, I met many honest and intelligent people shaking their heads in utter disbelief that the State Muslims would ever convictionally support India even after the reorientation of the Government policy on liberal

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lines. It is commonly held by the sceptics that the Muslims, guided by religious consideration, will under any circumstance desire Kashmir to accede to Pakistan. There is sufficient force is this argument and I do not want to underrate it. But depending on a past experience, I can confidently say that if proper measures are adopted for the achievement of the noble aim of influencing Muslim opinion in the right direction it is not impossible to do so.

Thirty years ago, we launched upon a similar adventure in Kashmir in July 1932 when we decided to secularise the State politics which had then come heavily under communal influences.

No one excepting Sheikh Abdullah and myself, guessed the Muslim Conference could be converted into a non-communal organisation. Do you remember tha letter which both of us sent to you jointly in June 1936 informing you about our intentions and the difficulties we faced in pushing through our plans. You were the first distinguished public man to lend your robust support to the move and bless it. Ironically, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed declared the idea as impractical and opposed it as harmful for the State Muslims when in June 1938 the proposal came up for discussion before the working committee of the Muslim Conference. Of course he is now the staunch standard-bearer of Nationalism and cannot brook communalism, much less Muslim Communalism, in the State.

Seven years patient and persistent labour ultimately bore fruit and on 10th June 1939 the Muslim Conference yielded to the call of Democracy when 173 delegates participating in the deliberations of the special session of the Conference voted the conversion of the organisation into a national body; barely 3 votes were recorded against the proposal.

I daresay we are confronted with a similar situation today. Relying on the experience gained by this unprecedented historical event let the Government of India shed the distrust of Kashmir Muslims and try to win them by liberalism when repression has proved unavailing and futile if not destructive and ruinous.

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It would be the unique triumph of Democracy when communalists are given fullest freedom to peacefully propagate their views but they find themselves completely ineffective. With fullest freedom of expression restored, we shall have laid securely and well the foundations of Democracy in Kashmir. My proposals, it will be seen, are directed towards the fulfilment of that objective.

I have mentioned the other grievances of the people in the Valley in my last letter and I need not lay any stress on them here; for, though important in themselves, they lose weight in comparison with the grave issue of the fundamental rights. Besides, I think they are mostly born of the unsettled dispute about accession.

With the liberalisation of the Government policy as envisaged above, I am very hopeful that the Kashmiris will offer unstinted co-operation for the implementation of the big economic projects and the money granted by the Centre will be most usefully spent. What is more, the shrivelled soul of the people will be liberated and enormous intellectual and spiritual forces released for the promotion of cultural renaissance which is our greatest need.

With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Anand Bhavan
Allahabad
July 26, 1962

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

Dear Prem Nathji,

I have your letter of July 18 which I have read with interest and care. It is a little difficult for me to send you a full answer as it would mean writing out at considerable length.

But I can assure you that I am very largely in agreement with you about civil liberties and freedom of expression. I

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may, however, point out to you that even in the most advanced countries in the world where a State is in peril, such as in war time, freedom of expression is limited. In the United States of America in many ways, even now, freedom of activity and expression is limited insofar as Communists are concerned. In fact, in a democracy there is grave danger of such limitations. In India at present there is a strong demand for action to be taken against communalists and communal organisations, also against the DMK in the South. I have resisted it but I realise that occasions may arise when some such action may have to be taken. Much depends on the growth of liberal ideas in the country and the general atmosphere that prevails. Repeatedly we have seen liberal ideas being suppressed because they were considered dangerous for the state ; but my inclination is towards giving the largest measure of freedom.

You wrote to me about the accession of the State being not complete. I do not quite understand this. It is complete. It is true, however, that a measure of autonomy is given to the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in regard to a few matters unlike the other States. This does not limit the accession in any way. It is the result of historical circumstances. As a matter of fact, during the last few years, much advance has been made in this matter. The Supreme Court, Elections, the Auditor General etc. function in the State as in other States. The whole trend, therefore, is to bring the Jammu and Kashmir State nearer to the rest of India. What remains are relatively unimportant matters and gradually they are lessening.

While accession is complete, it is true that Pakistan is there to create trouble which it continues to do in a variety of ways. There is hardly a day when intruders from Pakistan do not indulge in some bomb outrage or other. The speeches delivered from Pakistan go on referring to jehad and war. All this does create a certain abnormal atmosphere.

The real problem of Kashmir is whether it continues as a secular state as the rest of India or not. This affects the whole of India because secularism in India also has not got such firm foundation as I would like it to have. Anything happening

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in Kashmir will undoubtedly affect the rest of India with its vast Muslim population.

I hope you do not mind my sending your letters to me to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
August 4, 1962

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

I have to thank you for your letter of 26th July and am glad to learn that you are very largely in agreement with me about civil liberties and freedom of expression. I should have felt happier if you would have given some indication as to how the fundamental rights of the Kashmiris of which they have been mostly deprived for the past fifteen years, can be restored. In this respect you have maintained a studious silence which is rather disheartening though I can well appreciate your reluctance to enter into any controversy on the subject. But, as I have been at pains to explain, the real integration of Kashmir with India depends on the restoration of these rights. I earnestly expected you will kindly consider my suggestions regarding a change in the administrative policy of Kashmir to make it liberal and tolerant of dissent.

However, by stressing that "the real problem in Kashmir is whether it continues as secular state" you have put the vexing issue in its proper perspective. This question faces every lover of freedom in the Valley. Communalism is the antithesis of democracy and, therefore, it has to be fought and destroyed root and branch in whatever shape or form it presents itself. I have held this view for more than thirty-five years in the past. During the early thirties soon after the freedom struggle was born in Kashmir our sky remained for a period overcast

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with dark clouds of communalism which vitiated public life and caused mutual distrust, bitterness and turmoil. Happily, however, we successfully resisted the evil forces and with the conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference the State politics was formally secularised. I say "formally" because even after establishment of the popular non-communal organisation, the task of making the people understand the high ideal of secularism and how closely it is related to democracy and freedom was yet to be accomplished; the real secularisation which comes by a thorough knowledge of the nature of human values remained to be achieved. Unfortunately this aim has eluded our grasp even to this day. Your reminder is therefore apt and timely.

There is a substantial volume of goodwill for India in all classes of the Kashmiris including the Muslims. The Kashmiris recognise that they benefited by the several badly needed and long felt reforms which were speedily introduced in teeth of stiff opposition from the reactionaries by the present Government with the willing approval of the Union Government. Not only are the Kashmiris grateful for the tremendous efforts that are being made to reconstruct their economy by investment of huge sums and the special attention that is given to the State; they also do not fail to note how heroically the Indian Government is holding the fort of democracy when liberal institutions have been engulfed by the rising tide of militarism in many Asian countries, particularly those nearer home. That India has freely adopted a democratic constitution more than a decade ago and is now quietly bending her energies to make it a success endears her to the Kashmir people. Like in other places outside Kashmir, many young men and women in the Valley have been influenced. by the inspiring ideals and liberating ideas expounded in your writings. Such people notwithstanding the foolish deeds of the National Conference leaders, still retain faith in your sense of justice and statesmanship.

Believing that the most important problem confronting us in Kashmir is whether the State will continue to remain secular we may enquire if proper steps are being taken to

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make the people secular-minded. I am sure you will be the last person to say that Kashmir can remain secular without the people having any faith in the principle of secularism. Yet the fact is that the National Conference leaders are more anxious to preserve the form of the secular state and care little to improve its content. Indeed their doings have made people less secular-oriented than they were in pre-1947 days. From what I observed during the course of my extensive tour in the Valley I painfully observed that Muslims were in fact losing the little faith in secularism which they had previously imbibed. They are ridiculing the idea and identifying it with the repression, persecution and hooliganism. There is sufficient justification in saying that secularism in Kashmir today is superficial; it has no solid basis to stand upon. Under the least pressure from any side it is bound to crumble bringing disaster in its train.

The unwise handling of the political situation since 1947 is, in my opinion, mainly responsible for undermining the foundations of secularism in Kashmir. Nowhere have the sympathies of the ruled been won by the rulers through the employment of harsh measures. You know better that History, past and present, is replete with instances that minds and hearts of men have never changed through coercion. What is going on in Pakistan is a fresh lesson. Suppression by marshall law for four long and gruelling years has in no way improved the thinking of the people in that country as the army men expected and claimed; it has only induced the Pakistanis to adhere more closely to their old frequently denounced political beliefs. No wonder a similar process is taking place in Kashmir. The repressive policy is destroying our cherished dreams and demolishing the high hopes we have raised for years of building a secular state there.

The policy was bad both in its conception and execution from the start. Having preyed upon thousands of the Kashmiris for six years it claimed in 1953 as its victim some of its sponsors like Sheikh Abdullah, Mirza Afzal Beg and others. No freedom lover could ever have supported this policy. But I might concede that in the beginning when the subcontinent

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was partitioned and holocausts were witnessed in both parts, freedom had to be limited and extra-ordinary powers pressed into service to maintain law and order. But such emergency measures should always be of temporary nature to be withdrawn at the earliest opportunity; they cannot and should not be borne on the Statute Book permanently. Fifteen years have gone by and it is repeatedly announced that normalcy has returned to the State, yet not one of the numerous harsh laws or regulations is abrogated or amended. In fact, fresh arbitrary powers are being assumed by the Kashmir authorities to deal with the suspected opponents of the regime.

You have referred to the communalists and the DMK in your letter and reminded me that "in India at present there is a strong demand for action to be taken against communalists and communal organisations also against DMK in the South." You add that you have resisted the demand so far but you realise "that occasions may arise when some such action may have to be taken." Unfortunately it is true that "liberal ideas have been suppressed because they were considered dangerous for the State" and it is a great consolation that despite undesireable activities of communalists and separatists your "inclination is towards giving the largest measure of freedom."

Among the newly liberated nations of Afro-Asia region it is great good fortune of India that she has been able to grant and jealously guard the fundamental rights of her people and build a democratic structure. The structure is not perfect and has several defects but India excels her neighbours in having successfully held aloft the banner of Parliamentary democracy even when one after another many Asian countries failed to protect constitutional government. India stands like a beacon-light in a stormy occean at night. I dislike communalism and have no sympathy with the separatist tendencies of DMK but I detest views being smothered merely because they are unpalatable. Of course when a party or a person launches upon a violent campaign to practise ideas it is a different matter. Nevertheless it will be an evil day indeed when you will be compelled to adopt measures for the curtailment of liberties of groups or parties whose ideas are considered harmful. Sinister

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and flagitious ideas have to be vanquished not by rod but by nobler ideas and large hearted treatment. I am firmly of the opinion that instead of suppressing bodies whatever their aims it is advisable to find out why they are able to attract large or small sections of people towards them. If the genuine grievances of the misguided populace are redressed the slogans of mischief-mongers are rendered ineffective and their appeals bring forth little response. It is not fully realised how your liberal attitude towards your opponents is making the Kashmiris respect India and its political philosophy.

I have re-read my previous letter to you and see that nowhere in it have I stated that the accession of the State is incomplete. Where I referred indirectly to the accession was when I said that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed's insistence on maintaining the separate identity of Kashmir despite his undoubted desire for national integration may be easily traced to it (the accession issue). I appreciated Bakshi Sahib's insistence and reluctance to get the Article 370 (granting special status to Kashmir) in the Indian Constitution deleted because any prudent person in his position would do the same. The main reason for Sheikh Abdullah's political somersault in 1953 was, I believe, that he failed to cope with the rising pro-Pakistan Muslim opinion. As long as the pull of accession continues to exist in the Valley, no Muslim leader with desire for popularity can afford to support total absorption of Kashmir in India.

There is an impression in Kashmir that for whatever the National Conference leaders do, it carries your seal of approval. It is a common complaint that whenever you pay a visit to the Valley you publicly lend your fullest support to the Government and the National Conference. You never utter a word to mollify the victimised sections however genuine their grievances may be I heard honest and sincere people going to the length of asserting that you are deliberately conniving at the hooliganism for which certain National Conference elements have earned notoriety. I know this is an entirely mistaken belief. But no argument to disabuse their minds of it carries weight with the victims. Apart from being unfair to you, it is damaging to the fair name of India and is causing dissipation of the goodwill

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referred to above. What the Kashmiris repeatedly ask is why cannot India afford to give us even as much freedom of expression and civil liberties as are enjoyed by the people in the rest of the country ; why cannot the general elections be held in Kashmir as freely as in other States ? I must candidly admit that there is no satisfactory answer to this question.

I fully realise and so do many sensible public workers belonging to several opposition parties in Kashmir that it is not feasible to effect a total change in the present set-up nor is it advisable to overhaul the administration all at once. Sudden and complete reversal of the policy will be accompanied by grave risks which may defeat the very purpose for which the changes are sought to be made. But it is essential that a start should be made in gradually liberalising the policy by abrogating or amending the laws which have abridged the liberty of the individual or armed the executive with wide powers. Moreover, the malpractices mentioned in my previous letters should be totally stopped. What is more, the people should know that the old coercive methods are being replaced by a new enlightened policy which will assume vaster proportions as the people display their capacity for using the liberties properly. But in any case there should be a basic and qualitative change in the approach of the Government in regard to the fundamental rights of the people.

I have no doubt that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and most of his colleagues in the Government and the National Conference sincerely hold that the path chosen by them will ultimately lead Kashmir to democracy ; but I am equally certain that their policy is helping none but those who are bent upon destroying secularism in the State and thereby ending all chances of building democracy. The communalists thrive on the discontent of the people ; they take the fullest advantage of the widespread resentment and frustration to further their nefarious plans.

In my discussions with several members of the Kashmir Cabinet I found that some of them realize that the present approach has failed to produce good results and they appeared to me to be inclined to reconsider the matter in the light of the

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experience gained by them during the past 15 years. But the majority of the members are deadset against any change. It would appear that those who start, for any reason, resorting to marshal's baton for maintaining political authority soon become fond of it and end by feeling helpless in its absence. It is dismaying to note that the leaders of the National Conference cannot realize that by pursuing the wrong policy they are fast losing the credit they had earned through the good work done in the economic, educational and social fields.

The members of the Kashmir Government, it is painful to observe, are caught in a web woven by themselves. For the establishment of secularism and advancement of democracy they have to be disentangled. Who but you can liberate them by wise guidance and friendly advice when they have become incapable of seeing the light.

I know Kashmir is not yet out of woods. I do not deny that mischievous, unpatriotic and anti-democratic elements exist in the country which are on the lookout for an opportunity to subvert the State and create chaos, disorder and anarchy. I am also aware of the fact, as pointed out by you, that even in advanced countries when state is in peril, as in war time, freedom of expression is limited. Technically, Kashmir is in a state of cease-fire and hostilities have not fully ended yet. Nevertheless, I think there are other important considerations which should weigh with us when dealing with the Kashmir issue.

To make Kashmir's accession to India everlasting it is essential that the Kashmiris should feel convinced that economically as well as politically they will enjoy every freedom by remaining a part of the great Indian Nation at any rate to the extent as provided in the Constitution for the rest of India. As far as economy is concerned let me reiterate at the risk of being repititious, that they are convinced that their future is bright and they can reasonably expect increasing prosperity in the future through this association. But about politics they hold quite the contrary views with the result that even goodwill mentioned above is being slowly frittered away. This is very regrettable to say the least and should be a cause for deep concern.

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Much ground has been lost during the last few years by remaining complacent and reposing almost fatalistic trust in the seeming tranquillity in the Valley which I daresay is dangerously deceptive. It is already very late to do the right thing. No doubt risks are involved in making a new approach. But since the policy incessantly pursued till now has failed to achieve the desired objective, wisdom consists in giving a chance to the only other alternative we have. When all is said and done it is delightful to find that the heart of Kashmir is still sound. But the sands are running out and before long when India wakes up as it must someday in the near future if not today, it may be too late. No liberalisation of policy may be able to repair the damage that would have been done to the friendly relations between India and Kashmir till then. So I beseech you that some measures may be adopted to rectify the situation here and now. If secularism fails in Kashmir it will not only prove ruinous to the cause of Democracy in that State, the future of secularism in India will also be imperilled as you have rightly remarked.

The goodwill for India and the faith in your sense of justice are more powerful forces to keep alight a bit of secular spirit in Kashmir today than the might of the Indian armies, the fear of the Kashmir Government and the lathis of the National Conference ruffians. Let us not waste these two valuable assets.

I see no objection in your sending my letters to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, if you so desire it.

With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Prime Ministers House
NEW DELHI
August 7, 1962

*Shri Prem Nath Bazaz,*
*F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave*
*NEW DELHI-16*

Dear Shri Bazaz,

I have your letter of August 4. I am afraid it is difficult to write at length to you in regard to the various points you

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have raised. I agree with you that much can be done in Kashmir to improve the situation. I think gradually something has been done. It is true that political liberty does not exist there in the same measure as in the rest of India. At the same time, there is much more of it than there used to be.

At the present moment, there are continuous threats from the Pakistan side of war of some kind or other.

As you have no objection to it, I am sending your letters to Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed.

Your sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
August 18, 1962

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

From today's newspapers I learn that a five-man delegation of the Jammu Praja Parishad led by Shri Premnath Dogra has submitted a memorandum to President Radhakrishnan urging that the constitutional clause giving Kashmir a special status be removed and that the State law defining the rights of a permanent Kashmir citizen abrogated.

It is reported that the delegation has already interviewed some of the Central Cabinet ministers and is soon meeting you to press these demands. I am sure that no hasty action will be taken in the matter. I, however, thought I might bring certain important points to your notice in this connection.

Whatever the sins of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, it must be said in fairness to him that he is making supreme efforts to keep Kashmir with India. It can be done through force but the wiser course would be to do so with free will of the State people. Not much effort has to be made to secure the support of the Hindus for the purpose, but it is not easy to have the

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goodwill of Muslims. Despite the repressive policy which he has been pursuing all these years and with which I am in total disagreement, I think Bakshi Sahib is sincerely anxious to make the Kashmir Muslims appreciate that integration with India is more beneficial to them than accession to Pakistan. For this endeavour he deserves praise of the patriotic Hindus and not brickbats as are time and again hurled at him.

There is no doubt that the Article in the Constitution granting special status to Kashmir as well as the State law defining citizenship are helping the leaders of the National Conference to wean away the Muslims from pro-Pakistan inclinations. If, therefore, the demands of the Jammu Hindus are granted it will weaken the Kashmir Government and possibly bring about its downfall under enraged public opinion with unpredictable consequences for the State politics. The demands of Jammu Hindus are not unreasonable but dealing with delicate situation as we have in Kashmir it is prudent to bide time. Impatience is bound to defeat its own purpose.

As you pointed out in your letter of the 26th July 1962, the accession of Kashmir is complete. The Article 370 does not in any way hamper the supervisory work of the Union Government. But it does help the Kashmir leaders to satisfy the national yearning of the local Muslims for autonomy. With a more favourable situation in future when public opinion becomes dependable it might be possible to do away with this distinction but under the present circumstances I think it would not be advisable to consider the ultra-nationalistic demands of the Praja Parishad however logical they might appear theoretically.

Considering the incessant hostile propaganda from outside and the heavy pressure from inside, the Kashmir Government is doing a heroic job ; let its difficulties not be augmented by adopting measures which are by no means urgent.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Prime Minister's House
New Delhi
21st August, 1962

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

Dear Prem Nathji,

I have your letter of August 18th. It is true that I had a small deputation the other day led by Shri Prem Nath Dogra. I explained to him that what he said was not advisable. As a matter of fact much has been done in spite of Article in the Constitution which is supposed to give a special status to Kashmir and gradually what little remains will also go. The question is more a sentimental one than anything else. Sentiment is sometimes important, but we have to weigh both sides and I think that no change should be made in this matter at present.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
August 25, 1963

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
Prime Minister
NEW DELHI

My dear Panditji,

It was an agreeable surprise to learn that you have accepted the resignation of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and some one else is to succeed him as the Prime Minister of Kashmir. I feel that the step you have taken is fraught with far reaching consequences for good or evil of the country depending on the way the opportunity it affords is utilised by those who will be put at the helm of affairs in the Kashmir State.

In the letters which I wrote to you last year after my visit to the Valley, I had tried to impress upon you that though

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Kashmir people were grateful to India for the generous financial aid which was given for their economic and social welfare, they were unhappy because freedom of opinion was almost crushed there and coercive methods were employed to suppress any disagreement on vital issues with the rulers. Besides there was widespread corruption at all levels in the administration. I had pleaded for a liberalisation of the policy and adoption of some means to mollify the people.

After going through my report you agreed with me by saying that "much can be done in Kashmir to improve the situation". I imagine the time has arrived when effect can be given to your noble intentions.

It would be unfair to deny that Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed has done some good work in the past years. He has established one of the finest transport systems in the State ; cottage industries have received a fillip under his fostering care ; and the tourist industry has enormously developed since he became the Prime Minister. But somehow Bakshi Sahib has come to believe that anyone who disagrees with him is not a patriot and that law and order in Kashmir cannot be maintained without freely using the marshal's baton. With this approach Bakshi Sahib has been successful only in alienating the sympathies of the people and making Muslims hostile to India.

The failure of the recent talks between the representatives of India and Pakistan has shown that there is no meeting ground on which the Kashmir problem could be settled. It is hardly likely that mediation of a third party which U.S.A. and U.K. are sponsoring can lead to any better results. India is therefore left to her own resources to end the problem. Our urgent task is to wean away the Muslims from Pro-Pakistan inclinations. May I humbly suggest that this is not an impossible undertaking provided we are determined to meet the situation with courage and liberal statesmanship.

The removal of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed from the premiership, I believe should open a new chapter in State politics. We should endeavour to win the hearts of the Kashmir Muslims which are still bereft of any warmth for India. It is

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not an utopian dream that I am suggesting. Knowing as I do the Kashmir people, particularly the Muslims, it is within the realm of possibility to enlist the support of thoughtful and patriotic among them. With a change for the better in the policy so far pursued, I believe, they will be prepared to throw in their lot with India. I am especially optimistic about it in view of the developments in Pakistan and the bitter experiences made by the Kashmiris in Azad Kashmir. But the whole affair needs to be handled sagaciously.

If no change in Kashmir policy towards liberalisation is visualised after the acceptance of Bakshi Sahib's resignation then I think it is a move fraught with grave risk; for, of all the important political figures in the State today perhaps he alone is fit to rule with an iron hand and handle the situation under existing circumstances. By his removal from the premiership the conditions are apt to deteriorate.

I, however, believe that your decision is significant. It cannot be meaningless. You are no less anxious to see Kashmir politics normalised and the State people made happy and contented within the Indian Republic than any of the critics of your policy. I therefore congratulate you on this bold and wise step. It has not come a day too early after the failure of the Indo-Pakistan negotiations over Kashmir.

With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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# APPENDIX C

## Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq

F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
February 29, 1964

Shri G.M. Sadiq
Prime Minister
Jammu

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

In freeing themselves from the vicious hold of a despotic regime our people have achieved a splendid success. By stepping into the shoes of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, however, you have assumed a grave responsibility and worn a crown of thorns. No doubt your friends and all well wishers of Kashmiris feel gratified at the turn events have finally taken but you shall have to justify by your deeds within a reasonable period of time that you deserve the trust reposed in you.

As the head of the State Government you have to solve innumerable problems but it is well to remember that the most intractable of them all is the unfriendly attitude of the State Muslims towards India. It is futile to overlook the fact that the preponderant majority of the Muslims is unhappy over the

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unsettled accession dispute. Sooner or later this issue has to be ended according to the wishes of the State people. By merely repeating parrot-like that it has been already settled it does not cease to exist. Whatever the reasons, it must be candidly admitted that the Kashmir Muslims are at heart with Pakistan and desire to see the Valley forming a part of that country. The numberless difficulties that beset us today in different walks of life mostly stem from this main problem. It should therefore be your first concern to wean away the Muslims from the pro-Pakistan leanings not by coercion or application of harsh measures as has been ignominiously done by your predecessors during the past seventeen years but through democratic methods, humane behaviour and liberal treatment of those who disagree with your frequently professed pro-India views and unconcealed but honest criticism of Pakistan.

If no steps are taken to arrest the current thinking of the Valley Muslims, Kashmir is one day bound to fall like a ripe fruit in the lap of Pakistan. The only remedy, as far as I can see, is ideological conversion of the Muslims through sweet reasonableness and establishment of clean administration. It is, I am afraid, already late—perhaps too late—to successfully try this but I cannot conceive of any other alternative which can effectively meet the situation and consolidate the integration of Kashmir with India.

In this connection I would refer you to the talk we had about Sheikh Abdullah in June 1962. It is time that preparatory steps are taken to effect his release and win him over to your side for the building of social democracy in Kashmir.

Despite the shortsighted policy of the Indian Government which has been stubbornly pursued since 1947 and the unhappy events which have consequently been witnessed throughout this period, I fondly believe that our compatriots in the Valley can be persuaded to appreciate the blessings that a secular political setup can confer on them. In my opinion it is not impossible to keep Kashmir as integral part of India with the free will of the State people provided the problem is tackled in the right spirit and proper means are adopted to achieve this end.

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I have comprehensively dealt with this matter in my booklet "Kashmir Problem Reconsidered" and need not dilate on it here any further. But I would like to stress that the future of your Government will almost entire depend on how you will deal with this problem. If you succeed in converting the Muslims and in making them sincere supporters of the Indian Republic you will have worked a miracle and gone down in history as a unique leader of the people, a great patriot and a true democrat. But if you refuse to accept the existence of this problem or communist-like think that people will be compelled sooner or later to forget it, whatever may be your achievements in other fields you will not only go the way your predecessors have gone before you, it will also deal one more blow at Kashmir Democracy.

In the herculean task that you have undertaken to perform good intentions are not enough. Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed did not fail for want of these. But before they were in office for long they abandoned the democratic principles which they professed and held sacred previously. It is notorious that political leaders break the pledges and trample upon the assurances they solemnly give while in opposition. I trust you will not take this infamous course.

Never before has anyone in Kashmir accepted such onerous responsibilities which require extra-ordinary physical vigour and mental alertness; never before were the virtues like tolerance for others' views, generosity towards opponents and respect for human personality needed as they are today. For the accomplishment of the formidable task you must have cooperation from all sides. Unfortunately, situated as you are, you have enlisted more enemies than friends. It should be your endeavour to allay the fears, unfounded or real, of the opponents and thus multiply the number of your friends. A powerful leader speedily gathers multitudes of sycophants and time-servers round himself. You know how such self-seekers contributed to the downfall of your predecessors. I hope you will always avoid to meet them or encourage them in any way.

You will have been flooded with congratulatory letters on your elevation to the much coveted position from those

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who like you and those who do not like you, But I shall take time to watch further developments before I congratulate you for the honour that has been done to you. Frankly, I have misgivings about the role you will be able to play in clearing the augean stables and establishing democracy and in bringing much needed peace to the harassed people of Kashmir. The time for congratulations will, therefore, come when there are indications that Kashmir has found the right direction under your leadership and some day we can expect it to reach its destined goal of social democracy.

Meanwhile, I send you my good wishes and sincere assurances that I shall feel happy if I can be of any assistance to you in this noble adventure.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Prime Minister
Jammu & Kashmir
March 7, 1964

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

I thank you sincerely for your letter of February 29 which I went through with interest.

I entirely agree with you that problems awaiting solution are intricate and difficult. People expect much from us and, as you rightly say, we shall have to justify by deeds the trust reposed in us.

I can assure you on my own behalf and on behalf of my colleagues that in whatever we do we will be guided by considerations of people's good and the country's integrity.

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We have no doubt that in these endeavours we can look forward to active cooperation and blessings from friends like you.

Thanking you again and with warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
G. M. Sadiq

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
April 1st, 1964

TELEGRAM—ORDINARY

Mr. Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq,
Prime Minister,
JAMMU.

Sheikh's release another feather in your cap

Prem Nath Bazaz

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Prime Minister,
Jammu &Kashmir
April 3, 1964.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Thank you very much for your telegram of April 1, 1964.

The other day I noticed your letter in the *Times of India*. I am indeed grateful for the keen interest you have evinced in regard to the developments in Jammu and Kashmir.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
G. M. Sadiq

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
August 7, 1964

Mr. G. M. Sadiq
Prime Minister
Srinagar, Kashmir

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

I have already told you why I consider it inadvisable at present to convert the National Conference into a branch of the Indian National Congress or to make a move for the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution.

From Press reports I now learn that you contemplate amending the Ranbir Penal Code providing for deterrent punishment to individuals as well as political parties advocating secession of any territory from India. I have not been able to comprehend the implications of the proposal. Does it mean that anyone who says that the accession dispute is yet unsettled and the future affiliation of the State remains to be determined by the free vote of the people, will come within the mischief of the law after the amendment is passed and incorporated in the Code? If the reply be in the affirmative I am afraid your Government will land itself into great trouble and might unhappily be forced by degrees to adopt the same repressive and anti-people measures as its predecessors had done for 17 years.

Since you came to power I have taken it for granted that your first and foremost task will be to enlist the support of the State people, particularly the Muslims, for the solution of the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan. With that aim in view it is important that we try to understand and respect the feelings of our countrymen in vital matters of national significance. We have not only to create an impression that Kashmiris are free to shape their own future freely under the new dispensation but also actually to provide such freedom in ample measure. It is only then that the Kashmiris will begin to see secularism in a new and proper light and realise how necessary it is to build social democracy on the basis of secularism in their homeland.

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In writing the current series of pamphlets I am guided by the thought that one day sooner than later we will be able to awaken the rational self of our people and they will fully appreciate our stand and support us when the time of final reckoning arrives.

It seems to me that either I was mistaken in taking things for granted or your faith in the Kashmiris adopting the right course when afforded chance to do so has been shaken and you have despondently decided to compel the unwilling people to accept the present accession under harsh provision of the law. I feel rather alarmed at this because it is bound to destroy the good work that you have done and lead the State to restlessness; worse still, it will make the task easy for the enemies of democracy who can achieve their nefarious end long before the most optimistic among them can expect to do.

I am not inclined to be a nationalist; I consider nationalism like communalism to be a malady of human mind. But in the contemporary world this disease is so widespread that no practical politician can afford to ignore its influence and power.

In one of my previous letters I have told you that in my opinion the interests of Kashmir Nationalism and Indian Nationalism are not in every respect identical, at any rate for the present. Just now I do not want to enter into a discussion over this statement at length. But I must say that a person in your position devoted to democratic ideals has to exercise extreme caution in dealing with these two nationalisms; you have to maintain balance between them.

I may be wrong, but I have an impression that at times you and your colleagues are over zealous to appease the Indian nationalist sentiments at the cost of offending the Kashmir nationalist sentiment. This is not wise and will undoubtedly prove extremely harmful to the cause that all of us ardently desire to see triumphant.

For India it should be enough that you and your party stand steadfastly for Kashmir's accession to India and brook no compromise on it. While working to make this a reality, India should afford your Government widest latitude to mollify

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the sullen and discontented Kashmiris; otherwise there will be little hope for the State remaining with India permanently.

I can never believe that Kashmir will be integrated with India by some trick, intimidation or draconian law. There is no alternative to enlisting the voluntary support of the State people to set the seal of permanency on the temporary instrument of accession.

Instead of adopting ill-conceived measures to appease the Indians I think it would be better that you impress upon them that they should realize the precarious position of your party and Government and cease to be exacting in secondary important matters when on the basic issue of accession you are clear, unequivocal and firm.

By having publicly stated that you will soon replace National Conference by a branch of the Indian National Congress and that you contemplate recommending the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution you may have earned a little praise of the Hindus but you have surely yielded some ground to your opponents. If you now amend the Ranbir Penal Code virtually banning discussion on accession dispute, or the future of Kashmir, you will succeed only in creating enormous difficulties for yourself; you will alienate the sympathies of the people and force them to rally round those self-seekers who are astute enough to exploit the wounded pride and sentiments of our people.

It would be foolish to labour under the false hope that once a law has been enacted people will obey it or that they will be afraid of it. Emotionally moved communities—yes Kashmiris too—can suffer hardships if at calmer moments we find them reluctant to do so.

I would therefore earnestly request you to consider this aspect of your policy and revise it before irreparable harm has been done.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Prime Minister
Jammu and Kashmir
August 13,1964

Shri P.N. Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Thank you very much for your letter of August 7, 1964.

I should be in Delhi next week and we can meet some time and have a talk about various matters.

With warm personal regards,

Yours sincerely,
G.M. Sadiq

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
15th June, 1965

Mr. G.M. Sadiq
Chief Minister
Kashmir State
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

My study of the latest developments in Kashmir force me to arrive at the conclusion that, as I indicated in my last booklet *The Shape of Things in Kashmir*, the policy of liberalisation and democratisation has come to an end. Whatever the reasons, you are gradually adopting the course followed by your predecessors. This is very disconcerting indeed. My dreams about the future of Kashmir under your guidance are proving illusory and I feel deeply grieved at it.

I tried to contact you on telephone on two different dates when you were here but could not be successful. I wanted to meet you and have a talk. On both occasions Mr. S.K. Raina

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told me that he will convey my request to you and ring back after getting your reply. He never did and I wonder if you were told anything about it at all.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Chief Minister
Jammu and Kashmir
Srinagar
June 21,1965

Shri P.N. Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

I have your letter of June 15, 1965. I am sorry we could not meet when I was in Delhi last. My stay was very brief and most of the time I was busy with meetings of the Chief Ministers and the Congress Working Committee.

Your impression that the policy of democratisation followed by us has been abandoned is not justified. There has been absolutely no change in our basic stand on this and other issues and we do not impose any restriction on freedom of expression even in the face of worst provocation. You will no doubt appreciate that we are facing a situation which is threatening the very basis of a democratic system of Government founded on secular ideals. It is a threat posed by combined reactionary forces and is aimed at dismembering the State. As firm believers in democracy and secularism we cannot countenance such threats and have got to deal with them appropriately.

I hope to be able to meet you when I visit Delhi next so that we can have an exchange of ideas on various matters.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
G.M. Sadiq

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
28th June 1965

Mr. G.M. Sadiq
Chief Minister
Kashmir State
Srinagar Kashmir

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

I have your letter of the 21st June and am rather astonished to read it. I did not expect that, to justify deviation from the straight path, you would use the hackneyed argument of those men who, in modern democratic age, rule without the consent of the governed and, trying to defend their indefensible position, lay the entire blame for restlessness at the door of the small band of evil-intentioned disrupters.

Your letter has recalled to my mind the occasions when Sheikh Abdullah and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed in the heyday of their power justified their atrocities and misdeeds on almost similar grounds. While ruthlessly crushing democracy they appeared solicitous about the unity of the State and welfare of the people. Yet you and I know how false were their claims.

You say that "there has been absolutely no change in your basic stand on democratisation and other issues" and that "you do not impose any restrictions on freedom of expression even in the face of worst provocation." This categorical statement can hardly prove reassuring when I know that the assertion is not borne out by facts and recent developments in Kashmir. Imprisonment of hundreds of political workers without trial under the provisions of infamous laws mostly for holding views not in agreement with your own, arbitrary suspension of journals not supporting your policy and ban on holding of public meetings in the Valley do not corroborate your statement. Add to this the high-handedness of the police force, local and imported, and the picture becomes quite bleak. Excesses are excesses and do not gain sanctity because they are perpetrated under men claiming to be liberal. I will not touch upon other matters of less importance—less only by comparison

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—such as unabated corruption in the ranks of ruling party and government services. Such problems sink into insignificance in view of the fundamental issues I have raised here.

It is true that you are "facing a situation which is threatening the very basis of a democratic system of Government founded on secular ideals"; but that is not a recent development. Ever since the fateful day when Kashmir acceded to India the State rulers had to grapple with perplexing events and encounter tremendous difficulties in maintaining law and order. Most of these difficulties were born of the arrogant and undemocratic attitude adopted by the men in power and wrong policies persistently pursued by them. I think you fully realized this and were determined to start with a clean slate and reorientate the entire administrative set-up to effectively handle the situation with the willing support of the people. Manifestly you have failed in this noble adventure.

You say that "the threat posed by the combined reactionary forces is aimed at dismembering the State and as believers in democracy and secularism," "you cannot countenance such threats and have got to deal with them appropriately." Did it ever occur to you that some of the illconceived measures adopted by your Government have afforded the opportunity to the disarrayed reactionaries to consolidate their forces, get strengthened and pose the threat of which you now complain.

The biggest problem of the present-day Kashmir, as I can see, is the reconciliation of local Nationalism with Indian Nationalism. That leader alone has the chance to survive opposition onslaughts and lead the State people to the goal of democracy as a part of Indian Nation who can, during the transition period, wisely strike a balance between the demands and emotions of the Indians and the aspirations, urges and sentiments of the Kashmiris. Only thoughtless people can believe that the aims, inclinations, passions and desires of the two peoples are indentical in every respect today; such a notion is misleading and harmful. It is unfair to accuse Kashmir patriots of parochialism or narrow mindedness when they display communal tendencies as long as Indian Nationalism, despite its tall

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presumptuous claims, itself remains based on religious beliefs and Hindu mythology.

In making these observations I am not saying anything new. Last year some correspondence passed between us on this subject and I vividly recollect the long discussions I had with you at 5 Prithvi Raj Road a year ago soon after you came to power. You invariably gave me the impression that you will never act in a manner as would offend either Kashmir Nationalism or Indian Nationalism. Indeed, you assured me that you will not be a party to the further impairment of autonomy enjoyed by the State people under Indian Constitution nor to the replacement of the National Conference by the National Congress—the two aims that had been set by Indian reactionaries for achievement. Yet when last autumn Indian Nationalism launched upon an aggressive campaign to demolish the autonomy of the State without the consent of the Kashmiris you faltered and acted according to its bidding. How I wish you had taken a firm stand advocating the righteous cause of Kashmir Nationalism. I have no doubt in my mind that such firmness would have raised your moral stature in the State and outside. What is more, it would have brought such a solution of Kashmir nearer as you and I devoutly desire to find. It is possible that the influential Indian reactionaries would have contrived to deprive you and your confidents of power and installed a group of their choice instead. But that would have only enhanced your moral excellence and made you a more effective instrument for ending the Kashmir imbroglio at a not-too-distant future. Your surrender before Indian reaction has not added to your prestige nor has it in any way fulfilled the objective of Kashmir's emotional integration with India. It has only produced widespread disaffection against your Government which has been easily exploited by the fanatics, demagogues and enemies of democracy.

Surrounded by yesmen and careerists, rulers live in a world of their own far removed from reality, in which they confidently believe that every measure they adopt is justified by circumstances. Being a man endowed with a robust sense of self-criticisms you, I had thought, would be able frequently to break

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through the vicious circle round you and have a look at the stark reality beyond, but evidently I was mistaken.

For many months after you took over the administration in Kashmir, the people held you in high esteem. I have been witness to this wide sentiment as late as in October last year when I paid a short visit to the Valley. My enquiries led me to the finding that though your party was not popular, you and some of your colleagues were respected as men of integrity; the idea of prejudging you was discounted in sober and intellectual circles; hopes were entertained in your sense of statesmanship and honesty of purpose; you were to be judged on the merit of your work. Even your opponents talked about you with reserve and restraint.

It was heartening to see that the reactionary and illiberal elements were unsure of their stance, not knowing what political programme they could formulate after civil liberties and democratic rights had been fully guaranteed to the people by your Government. "Accession to Pakistan" slogan though still fraught with dangerous potentialities, was gradually losing its appeal and attraction.

It pains me to have to say that today things are quite different. It is not what the sworn enemies of secularism and democracy proclaim that disturbs me; it is what impartial observers and critics whose honesty is unimpeachable say, that matters. And it is widely believed by them that the line which separated you from your predecessors has become indistinct. Simply by assaverating with vehemence that "there has been no basic change" in your stand and you "do not impose any restrictions on freedom of expression even in the face of worst provocation" cannot carry conviction when facts loudly speak otherwise or point to other direction. There might be a difference of degree but qualitatively considered there is little change now in the present regime and those that have preceded it.

As you fully know, after a thorough study of the political and economic developments in India and Pakistan during the past eighteen years, I have come to believe that the destiny of Kashmir will be fulfilled by its continuing to remain as part of

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India. But I detest the idea of bringing about this alliance through use of force or against the will of the Kashmiris. Apart from being exceptionable on moral principles, use of force defeats its own purpose. The days are gone when a class or a community could be compelled to change its views through coercion; conversion by reasoning and persuasion is the only road to victory. Unlike the Indian nationalists and most of your loyal followers, I hold that but for the blunders made by your predecessors and now also by you, the voluntary integration would be possible, the pre-requisite being inexhaustible patience. uncommon forbearance, keen farsightedness and, above all, genuine regard for secularism and democracy on the part of Indian and Kashmiri leaders.

In you I recognised a leader gifted with the qualities needed to meet the situation. That is what made me so enthusiastic about State politics last year when circumstances brought you to power. Despite your aberrations, the hope that you will not disappoint the Kashmir democrats lingers on, possibly because I fail to see any other towering personality among the Kashmiri Muslims capable enough to accomplish the historic task. I wonder if you will be able to retrieve the position lost by you during the past few months. But I can think of no other way out of the impasse than by pointing out to you what causes have led Kashmir to the verge of present peril; for it is never too late to do the right thing.

I have come to believe that until the cultural level of our compatriots is raised through dissemination of education and knowledge it is not possible to establish social democracy in our homeland. The real task therefore is to awaken the dormant rational faculties of the people to enable them to think for themselves. You will be interested to learn that I have finally decided to devote the rest of my life for the achievement of this end; active party politics I leave to men and women more energetic and stout hearted than myself.

During the closing days of last year I prepared a plan for the cultural work and sent it to you for opinion. You found it interesting and asked Syed Mir Qasim to consider how far you and I could work it out. Two months later on 12th

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February Qasim Sahib apologized for delay in sending me a reply and added that the note was being studied carefully. Nothing further was heard in the matter either from you or him.

Nevertheless, I am earnest to implement the plan as best as I can. I intend to make a trip to the Valley next month. There are a few hurdless in the way which I want to be removed before I can settle down and start the work. In this I ardently wish that friends like yourself will lend me their helping hand.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

(I did not get any reply to this letter. But a few days after posting it Sadiq Sahib and I happened to fly by the same plane on 13th July from New Delhi to Srinagar. Commenting on the letter he told me that it was "an exercise in intellectualism" but that he was impressed by it and had therefore circulated it among his colleagues and advised them to note my observations-*Bazaz.*)

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI—16
13th August, 1965

Mr. G. M. Sadiq
Chief Minister
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

I returned from Srinagar yesterday. Before departure I tried to contact you many a time for several days but was not successful.

However, I had been keeping in touch with the developments created by the infiltration of armed men from across the cease-fire line as well as the reactions in different quarters including the ruling party and the opposition.

I was glad to note that this time your Government has been able to keep the psycho-political aspect of the development in view and, despite pressures, has turned down the demands that would further alienate Muslim public opinion. I hope the balance will be maintained till the day this invasion from Pakistan is completely crushed.

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I am thinking of meeting important people here to advise them that until there is a sane and rational approach to Kashmir State affairs and sincere co-operation with your liberal policy, the problem may never be solved.

If you intend to come here early we could have a talk on matters that are uppermost in my mind.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

---

Chief Minister
Jammu and Kashmir
Srinagar
August 17, 1965

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Haus Khas Enclave
New Delhi—16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Thank you for your letter of August 13, 1965.

I am sorry we could not have another meeting before your departure for Delhi. I did receive your messages but owing to extreme preoccupation with the recent developments I could not have the pleasure of meeting you again.

As you have seen, Pakistan has cast away its mask and is again seeking to cow down the people of the State by naked force. We are determined to resist this onslaught with all our strength and I have no doubt that whatever the odds we shall succeed. In this test I and my colleagues look forward to your valuable advice and active cooperation.

I shall have the pleasure of meeting you when I visit Delhi next.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,
G. M. Sadiq

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
September 17,1965

Mr. G.M. Sadiq
Chief Minister
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Sadiq Sahib,

Many thanks for your letters of the 8th and 9th September.

The situation has certainly changed drastically and the fear persists that it may develop into a global war if the Chinese decide to fish in the troubled waters. Let us hope that the sane advice given by Russia and U.S.A. will produce a salutary effect on the Chinese mind, and they will desist from involving the world in a big conflagration.

As it is, I think the war will be a prolonged affair and since the aims of India and Pakistan are diametrically opposed, early end of the hostilities is nowhere in sight. If the supplies to Pakistan are replenished by certain small powers the war may drag on for months, even years.

But there is a greater possibility that international pressure will be brought to bear upon the two warring nations to come to terms and have a lasting settlement between them. If this bears fruit I can envisage a twofold outcome.

Pakistan will be made to realise that it was improper on its part to despatch armed infiltrators into Jammu and Kashmir. She may even be mildly censured by the U.N. Security Council for her action.

Nevertheless, taking into account the prevailing trend in world opinion it would seem that India will not come out quite triumphant : she may not be able to avoid holding of a referendum under U.N. auspices in one form or the other to ascertain the will of the State people. The three-point plan of F.M. Ayub is a propaganda hit meant to hoodwink the world, particularly the Afro-Asian nations ; it cannot be acceptable to this country but I cannot see how, in view of the strong world opinion, India can continue to maintain its rigid attitude

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towards the Kashmir issue ; she may be compelled to soften and make at least some allowances.

If you remember the line of reasoning in the pamphlets I wrote since you came to power, I could see this coming even before the hostilities broke out last month.

I therefore feel very unhappy that despite my best efforts to impress upon you the grave necessity of educating our people to face the inevitable test, I have failed to sufficiently enthuse you and your colleagues in this direction. You no doubt always agreed with me that India cannot retain Kashmir without the will of the Kashmiris but the task of educating people was never considered as urgent and important as other parts of your political activity.

Consequently we have let more than nineteen months pass by without taking up this most essential work demanding our immediate attention.

In saying this I do not overlook the activities in the form of gatherings and seminars conducted by leaders of your Party. I read about them in the *Khidmat* and also get reports from friends. I note with pleasure that lately efforts are being made to awaken womenfolk in the Valley. Valuable as this propaganda work is in some respects, it is not helpful to meet the situation with which we are confronted and the gravity it will increasingly assume. For that we need *education* not mere propaganda. We have to ground people on the philosophy of humanism and convince them why religious approach is unsuited for the achievement of freedom and democracy ; we have to explode the two-nation theory with substantial and cogent arguments shattering the foundations on which it stands. We do not need parrots to cry pleasant slogans or deliver hackneyed statements which have been repeated a thousand times in the past. We need a number of intelligent youg men and women possessing critical faculty who can think independently for themselves and present national problems dispassionately and objectively so as to carry conviction with others who disagree with us at present.

I believe that despite Ayub's three months limit a new cease-fire agreement *if* and when it is signed, will give us a suffi-

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cient breathing space of some years to prepare the people for the historic task. Let us not waste any more precious time and let not grass grow under our feet; let us bend our energy fully to the first task first.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz.

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Chief Minister
Jammu and Kashmir
Srinagar
Sept. 27, 1965

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Eclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Many thanks for your letter of Sept. 17, 1965.

There are bound to be various pressures from interested foreign quarters for re-opening the Kashmir question. We shall have to be wary of all such attempts and ensure that the old game does not succeed. It is heartening to find the whole country speak with one voice against foreign machinations and in support of the firm stand taken by the Central Government.

As the debate in Parliament yesterday showed, lot of re-thinking would have to be done about various aspects of our foreign policy. Our country has come to a stage where it should be possible for us to tell the world that friendship and co-operation cannot be a one way traffic but has to be based on reciprocity and mutual response. Too long have we allowed an impression to go round that we are always willing to yield to pressure from big powers. I have no doubt that in its present mood the country will be able to make a number of important decisions having a bearing on our future growth.

I agree that there is need for educating people in Kashmir about our approach to problems and with regard to our funda-

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mental policies. We are trying to do our bit in this connection and I have no doubt that you and other friends will help us in this task.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
G.M. Sadiq

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## APPENDIX D

### Correspondence Between Prem Nath Bazaz and others Holding Different Views

*(a) Between Abdul Aziz and Prem Nath Bazaz*

P/929, Banni
Rawalpindi (Pakistan)
6th December, 1962

Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

I have read with interest your lengthy series of articles recently published in the *Radical Humanist* (*R.H.*), Calcutta, your statement on the Sino-Indian border trouble in the *Thought*, Delhi, and your letter to the Editor, *Thought*, published in its issue of 1st December, 1962.

In nutshell, you suggest that India should liberalise her Kashmir policy so that Kashmir can be retained by India "with the free will of the people".

From whatever you wrote in the past, it was clear that "free will" only meant a plebiscite under the UN or any other impartial agency but now you seem to have forgotten that altogether. There was a day when in Kashmir you and all of us fought for independence of Jammu and Kashmir State. This continued till the formation of India and Pakistan as free countries. After that you issued posters "on behalf of the working committee of the Kisan Mazdoor Conference and the Kashmir Socialist Party" that the best course for Kashmir people would be the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan and a

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referendum as a means to that end. Then after your release from jail in 1950 you wrote the book *Azad Kashmir* and denounced independent Kashmir as impracticable but after some years you again started writing for the independence of the whole State or at least the Valley of Kashmir. But after 15 years of all your writings, statements, books and pamphlets favouring a free plebiscite you agree to Kashmir remaining with India.

Although we have not met after 1947 we are friends and sympathisers of each other. There is a Persian proverb which means that a true friend is one who is like a mirror to you i.e. who reveals to you your good as well as bad points. To say the least about your present stand, it is the stand of a tired man, a defeatist. You have gone the way which others went earlier. It pains me to write like this to you whom I have held in the highest esteem for the last 16 years.

What, by the way, should be the position of the Kisan Mazdoor Conference, a member of whose working committee you are supposed to be, in this matter ? You will remember that when Mr. Yatu was exiled to Pakistan in 1951 and he, in a Press conference, said that his party stood for an overall plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir, you wrote to him that it was cowardice on his part to say so because in actual fact our party stood for a regional plebiscite. Or, do you think you have ceased to be a member of the Kisan Mazdoor Conference since long ?

Let me, however, assure you that I have great respect for you as a writer and a friend, but for politics you seem to have left your friends in midway. At least I could not expect this from a man whom once upon a time I thought to be "Kashmir's Man of Tomorrow".

When the *Radical Humanist* last time suggested a similar action in Kashmir you objected to it in the "Forum" of the journal, but now you also have advanced the same theory that what cannot be cured must be endured.

Trusting that this will find you in the best of your health.

Yours very sincerely,

Mir Abdul Aziz

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F/8, Hauz Khas enclave
New Delhi-16
December 13, 1962

Mir Abdul Aziz
Editor "Insaf"
P. O. Banni
RAWALPINDI (Pakistan)

My dear Mir Sahib,

After a long time I have your letter of the 6th December 1962.

The articles on Kashmir published in the *Radical Humanist* were written not only to give expression to my reconsidered views on the problem confronting us but also to stimulate thinking and provoke criticism. Therefore, your candid comments have not ruffled me as you seem to apprehend. Indeed, I am glad you said what you wanted to say.

The gravemen of your charge against me is that after having supported for 15 years in my writings and statements, a free plebiscite in Kashmir and the State's accession to Pakistan, I have now suggested the formation of Kashmir as a part of India. This is partly correct but mainly wrong and I think you have not given the consideration to the articles that they deserve.

The developments in India and Pakistan during the past fifteen years have no doubt forced me to revise my ideas about several matters pertaining to Kashmir but there has been absolutely no change so far as the basic issue is concerned. I continue to hold steadfastly that the future of Kashmir should be freely decided by the people of Kashmir. While bemoaning my present stand you have evidently overlooked some unambiguous statements in the articles. I quote one of these:

> Let me hasten to add that my informants are, as I am, strongly of the view that ultimately the future of Kashmir shall have to be forged by the people themselves. We do not at all propose to surrender the right of self-determination of the Kashmiris but we believe it shall have to be exercised in a different setting without creating ill-will or disturbing the peace of the sub-continent. We believe the freely expressed will of the people alone can bring the abiding solution of the Kashmir problem.

Nothing could be more clear and unequivocal than this delineation of the ideal which had brought both of us close to each other and for which we have been fighting and continue

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to fight till this day. What seems to have annoyed and irritated you to the extent of ignoring such statements is the appreciative references I made to the good work that has been done in Kashmir by the Indian Government. As an honest man I could not help doing so. For, economically and socially, I found Kashmiris today better off than they were ever during the past century and more. I could not believe it nor rely for it on official reports until I made personal studies in different parts of the Valley. The tour proved an eye-opener and I arrived at certain far-reaching conclusions. Among others, I learnt that the main reason for the Kashmiri Muslims to remain docile despite political repression and their undoubted pro-Pakistan leanings is this increasing and unprecedented economic progress.

The solution of an independent Kashmir is still, in my opinion, preferable to absorption of the State by India or Pakistan. But in politics I owe allegiance solely to the fundamental right of self-determination. Other things are minor and subsidiary to it; these can undergo changes according to the exigencies and demands of time.

For me there never was anything sacrosanct in the idea that Kashmir should become a part of Pakistan. It was a means for the achievement of an ideal. In 1947 when the subcontinent was partitioned on religious basis such accession appeared to be natural and inevitable. But the subsequent developments cast serious doubts on this line of thinking. Gradually I began to realise that Kashmir democracy will fare better by association with India than with Pakistan if that is the alternative the State has to willy nilly accept. What fate awaits democracy in Pakistan after a decade or so I cannot foresee. But it is obvious that under the present dispensation democrats and democratic institutions have to languish in that country. How can fighters for Kashmir's freedom aspire to attaint their goal if Kashmir accedes to Pakistan, I cannot comprehend ? Suhrawardy was eminently right when he declared the other day that Pakistanis must establish democracy in their own land first if they want Kashmir to come to them. You too have been stressing this point time and again in your journal.

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I do not uphold for a moment that India is a perfect democracy but it certainly is not a military dictatorship. Even after the imposition of harsh laws enacted to deal with the present emergency caused by the Chinese aggression, the Indians can give expression to their feelings and views much more freely than the people can think of in Pakistan.

This, however, does not imply that if we are allowed to make our choice of acceding either to Pakistan or India — and despite the intercession of the British and the Americans it is highly unlikely we will be—and the people decide to join Pakistan, I will block such a process. I shall welcome any democratic decision of my compatriots because I have always held that freedom of expression is the most sacred human right and the only reliable weapon through which man can fulfil his destiny. In no case can I advocate that Kashmiris, and for that matter people anywhere, should be compelled to live under a regime which they detest merely because their choice will not be to the liking of their self-appointed protectors.

At present India is involved in a life and death struggle with China. Superficially looked at, it is a mere border dispute but in reality it is much more than that ; it is a gigantic tussle between two ideologies for supremacy; it is a war between democracy and totalitarianism between freedom and slavery ; in fact, it is the struggle of human civilisation for survival.

Pakistan seems to think that because India is not prepared to come to an understanding with her over Kashmir therefore she should adopt an attitude which would pave way for the destruction of India even though it might also end in her own annihilation. This is not a praiseworthy policy to say the least and I feel extremely unhappy over its adoption.

I do not underrate the justifiable anger of the Pakistanis over India's persistent refusal to come to an understanding. But the wise course for Pakistan in her own interests if not for anything else, would have been to recognise the danger of Red invasion and sympathise with India in its trouble. That would have created a fund of goodwill for her in this country and smoothened the task of the growing section of Indians who

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sincerely wish to have friendly relations with Pakistan. By becoming extremely unfriendly at the present time, Pakistan has only weakened the hands of those farsighted Indians who endeavour for a democratic solution of the Kashmir issue honourable to both the countries. And thus the chances of a settlement have been foolishly marred. It is the game of the extremists in India that Pakistan is playing. Like their counterparts on your side bigots here would prefer to see Indian democracy trampled under foot by the Chinese communists rather than that it befriended the Pakistanis.

I wish we could calmly discuss these important issues personally but it is a pity that a meeting is not possible now or in the near future. I would, however, request you to view all matters in these days of stress and strain from a broad perspective; let no immediate gains befog our intellect.

In spite of the long years of suffering, I may assure you, I am neither tired nor have I become a defeatist. It is true every Kashmiri today feels more or less frustrated and it would not be surprising if I share the nation-wide bafflement. But as an inividual I am not prepared to accept your accusation. I see no sense in clinging to exploded theories and disproved notions. We are living in dynamic times when we should be vigilant so that we are not thrown into the back waters of history by remaining attached to hackneyed ideas and by refusing to move with the forces of progress.

For many past months I have been seriously thinking of returning to Kashmir in order to resettle there and build a cultural movement for the regeneration of the people as envisaged in the last instalment of the article in the R. H. I do not know if I shall succeed in this endeavour because there are many hurdles in the way.

I hope your wife and children are doing well. With love to them all.

Your sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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P/929, Banni
Rawalpindi

Pandit Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Bazaz Sahib,

Thank you for your letter of 13th December, 1962, which I received a week ago. I could not write to you because I was on a short visit to Muzaffarabad.

If the Indian Government have done any good work in Kashmir, they deserve all the credit for that. I may, however, inform you that in Azad Kashmir which was neglected by the Dogras, immense progress has been made in the fields of education, public works, village aid and all that. That is not to be disputed either.

I do not disagree with you when you say that India and Pakistan should join hands to save the sub-continent from Red aggression. As a Kashmiri how can I tolerate that 14,000 square miles of J & K State territory have been usurped by China. But at the same time every Kashmiri must fight against the intransigence of the Indian leadership in Kashmir and that is what you seem to have given up for good. In your lengthy article in the R. H. there is not even indirect reference to the Chinese menace. Obviously that article has been written by you before the latest Sino-Indian situation. To change your ideas and ideals this way or that because Pakistan Government did this or Indian Government does that is meaningless. Suppose, God forbid, there is a military dictatorship in India, will you start then working against India's retention of Kashmir and advocate that Kashmiris should join some other country ?

As regards your plans to go to Kashmir and settle there, it is yet another proof of your being prepared to compromise with your ideals. I do not know what difficulties you may be facing there. But it is certain that in the existing conditions of Kashmir, the Prem Nath Bazaz of 1946-47 and onwards, who fought for the rights of Kashmiris cannot function as he did

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before. If you do that, they will put you into prison again, but if you give up active politics they may tolerate you and I am sure they can tolerate anybody who is ready to give an assurance of "good behaviour".

By the way, friends here have, during the last years, been reading with concern and criticism all what you wrote about the fellow whom once you condemned as the Hitler of Kashmir. If he comes to power again, what is the guarantee that he would not behave in the same manner again ?

It is encouraging to note that you still prefer an independent Kashmir to one that is part of India or Pakistan. But in your article in the R. H. there is no mention of independent Kashmir at all. It, I am afraid, is an after thought on your part.

I, however, feel that if better sense prevails on both sides, Kashmir Valley may be made autonomous. This would be an amicable and honourable solution for the three parties, India, Pakistan and Kashmiris. In that case, Kashmir, which was the reason of discord for the past 15 years between India and Pakistan, may prove to be the bond of friendship between the two.

During the last 14 years in this country, I have faced worst sort of persecution, economic and financial distress and victimization, but I never gave up hope. You are a man of sterling qualities and I pray to God Almighty that your frustration would end and you would start working for your people as before.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
Mir Abdul Aziz

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
January 31, 1963

Mir Abdul Aziz
Editor Insaf
Banni, Rawalpindi (Pakistan)

My dear Mir Sahib,

Pardon me for the unusual delay in sending a reply to your letter without date which I received more than a month ago. I was busy with the preparation of *Indian Pharmaceutical Guide* and the Special Number of *Eastern Pharmacist* which left little time to attend to my personal correspondence.

There is no new point in your letter which has not been already dealt with by me before. It is no use repeating the same arguments in another form. But I would like to state one or two things which will help to clarify my position in regard to the Kashmir problem in particular and to politics in general.

If I have been able to understand correctly you have tenaciously adhered to the beliefs and ideologies which all of us held fifteen years ago when we were forcibly dispersed and made to part physically from one another. That gives you a satisfaction which is born of consistency. Unfortunately, I am deprived of that kind of happiness. With every new experience in life my views and beliefs have undergone some change. I have been constructing and reconstructing my ideologies. As soon as I get disillusioned about a cherished notion I do not hesitate to dislodge it from my mind. I have no use for the consistency which is applauded in the circles of thoughtless multitudes. I believe that the man who refuses to alter or amend his views in the light of new facts and fresh experiences ceases to play his proper role and retards human progress. To me change is the pith of life and the only way to reach the destiny in an evolutionary society. If therefore you judge me by the tests that we had laid down and the beliefs which we held in pre 1947 days you are sure to get disappointed.

When I told you in my last letter that in politics I owe allegiance solely to the principle that the future of the enslaved

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peoples should be decided through the free exercise of their right of self determination, I was not sure that I gave you the whole truth. The fact is that my faith in this principle is not unshaken after what has taken place in most of the Afro-Asian countries which were liberated from foreign imperialism during the past years. It is foolish to think, as we did at one time, that any and every people can choose rightly and in their own interests if allowed to do so freely. Ignorant, gullible and inexperienced can be hypnotised by self-seeking leaders and easily made to vote their own execution. It is a mockery to talk of the sacred right of self-determination for those who cannot discriminate between good and evil and who can be led like sheep once their confidence has been cleverly gained. Usually it is the unscrupulous power-hunter who is successful in getting the ear of the backward people.

Look anywhere at the world of the newly liberated Afro-Asian nations and you will find how miserable the people are. It is only the ruling cliques which are happy and enjoy life at the heavy cost paid by the followers. Everything considerd, I wonder if the liberated people are better off in any way today than they were under the imperialist rule. For me it has become meaningless to say that people should have the right of self-determination because *in any circumstance* they can choose freely and always in the furtherance of their happiness and freedom. It is a joke to talk of their independent judgement. Those who aspire to capture power in the backward people harp on the right of self-determination; honest, selfless and moral men should refuse to play the game.

The hollowness of self-determination principle had come to light when Hitler, riding on the crest of popularity, captured power with the majority vote of the mesmerized Germans only to mercilessly suppress them. It has now been underlined by the developments in the newly emancipated countries of Africo-Asian continents. Those leaders who attained power in the name of democracy are ridiculing it and building police states to hold people in subjugation.

Was then I hypocritically stressing the importance of the principle of self-determination in my last letter ? No. Though

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I no longer repose that firm faith in it which I had fifteen years ago, I continue to cling to it because I have not been able to find an alternative. If we altogether discard this principle we are immediately faced with a vacuum in politics. The theory of divine right of kings to rule has been exploded; we cannot admit the infallibility of any person or band of people, however wise; we, therefore, fall back on, and have to accept, the principle of self-determination of the people until a better alternative is forthcoming. Meanwhile, we should neither lose sight of its defects and defeciencies nor forget that our primary task is to raise the cultural level of the people enabling them to discriminate between right and wrong.

You have pinned your hopes on independent Kashmir as the best solution of the problem. You seem to think that our compatriots will fare better under such a setup than they would if the State accedes either to India or Pakistan. Although I too have expressed my preference for such a settlement over absorption in India or Pakistan, I entertain no such hope. I can guess a harder time for the poor Kashmiris particularly those imbued with love of progress, if Kashmir becomes independent. Whatever castles you may build through your fertile imagination in the Kashmir Valley with autonomous status, the fact, as I was able to ascertain during the course of my recent tour, is that the known gang of fascists will be placed in the saddle by the same people through the exercise of the right of self-determination, whom they trampled underfoot from 1947-1953 and even earlier. In independent Kashmir the rulers will not be controlled by the supervisory power of a central authority as at present. The people will be entirely helpless with no one to whom they can appeal. Had we not already known the would-be rulers of independent Kashmir perhaps there would be some sense or even justification in taking the risk. But you, more than any one else, have had the bitter experience of such rule; then how unwise it is to fervently ask, directly or indirectly, again for the same. Demand for independent Kashmir shows in what a desperate condition we are; it in no way furnishes proof of our prudence. We are making virtue of a necessity.

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Now all this sounds depressing and pessimistic. But it is not really so. To learn by experience and become aware of the snares and pitfalls on the path towards the goal which one wants to reach is to achieve strength for resuming the journey. If we continue to live in an unreal world as we have done long enough, we may find at the end of our earthly existence, that, believing otherwise all along, we have registered no progress. That will be a terrible disappointment at the time of death. I am trying to escape it.

Your sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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(*b*) *Between Sridhar Kaul and Prcm Nath Bazaz*

Rainawari,
Srinagar, Kashmir
March 10, 1963.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Haus Khas Enclave
New Delhi—16

My dear Perm Nathji,

Many thanks for your booklet "Kashmir Problem Reconsidered" which I received some days back. While I substantially endorse your suggestions for the improvement of the present situation in Kashmir, I take leave to make the following observations :

(1) Do we want Kashmir's accession to India to remain in tact and even to abrogate the provisions in the Indian Constitution conferring a special status on Kashmir or do we want to leave it to the majority vote in Kashmir to decide the future of the country through a plebiscite ? We have to be clear in our minds on the point.

(2) That the people of Kashmir will make rapid progress in all directions—as they have already done economically—under India's fostering care and its progressive, secular, democratic Constitution goes without saying. Conditions prevailing in

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Pakistan and Azad Kashmir make it equally evident that the hands of the clock will be put back indefinitely if circumstances drive Kashmir into the arms of Pakistan. The masses being politically raw and immature cannot be expected to exercise their judgement correctly and in case of the latter eventuality appalling consequences must ensue as far as the Hindu minority in Kashmir and the Muslim minority in India are concerned, even though the holocaust of the partition days is not re-enacted.

(3) The Muslim masses—and I am afraid, even the intelligentsia—are bound to cast their vote in favour of Pakistan in case the matter is decided through a plebiscite. Apart from the fact that religion occupies the first place in a Muslim's scheme of values, cultural and religious affinity will inevitably be the decisive factor for them in determining their choice and the rosiest visions of political and economic progress accompanied with the fullest religious and cultural freedom under India will be powerless to lure them away from the duty and devotion they owe to their religion according to their own lights. Why do not the people of Azad Kashmir express a desire to be integrated with those of Indian Kashmir to share the progress and prosperity the latter enjoy and why do they in preference elect to live under the despotic dictatorship under which Pakistan is groaning? And why do the Muslim masses of Kashmir, oblivious of the enormous benefits they enjoy under India, crave to be made over to Pakistan with all the grave privations that such a change will bring in its train?

(4) Whatever orthodox secularists may say, it is a stark, solid fact that India was partitioned on the basis of the two-nation theory. And even Kashmir is not immune to the virus of communal consciousness. If the ruler of Kashmir had been a Muslim, the 1931 agitation, I believe, would never have been launched. If the Muslim Conference was converted into the National Conference, it was as an act of expediency on the part of the members influenced by your irresistible advocacy and not as a result of their real conversion to the nationalist creed. The fact that you had to resign from the Conference after it wore the nationalist mask is a sufficient proof of this.

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(5) Even in this second half of the 20th century mankind is divided by impregnable walls of religion and nationality. Even Russia and China though swearing by internationalism fail to rise above national chauvinism. The day when man will meet man purely as man and not under labels of religion and nationality is yet far distant. The millennium has not yet dawned.

(6) The Kashmiri Pandits as a community are disgruntled perhaps because the services, contracts, admissions to colleges, industrial loans and such things are, according to them, distributed on a communal basis which reduces the loudly proclaimed secular character of the state to a ridiculous farce. The very fact that Bakshi Sahib in his talks with you justified the present state of affairs in respect of the services by referring to the more than due share enjoyed by the Pandits *i. e.* the share to which they would be entitled by their proportion in the population is a positive proof of the fact that communal proportion in the population is the guiding principle in the distribution of the loaves and fishesof office. That, I think, is a travesty of secularism which should regard all citizens as Kashmiris and not as Hindus and Muslims, for all political and administrative purposes. I do not challenge the statement made by Bakshi Sahib in this connection.

(7) In the best interests of the people of Kashmir—both Muslims and Hindus—Kashmir should, in my view, continue to be an integral part of India and all our endeavours should, therefore, be directed towards this end. If Pakistan were not there to fan the flame of religious sentiment in the hearts of the Muslims of Kashmir they would, I think, live contented with their lot as citizens of India, happy in the prosperity and affluence which association with India guarantees for them. And Pakistan will never cry a halt to its sinister propaganda and its determined efforts to foment trouble in Kashmir until India arrives at a final settlement with it over the accession issue; and until this happens, the present atmosphere of doubt, uncertainty and suspense will persist. The frustration, discontent and unhappiness which overshadow the State at present are directly traceable to this atmosphere. All the ills enumera-

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ted by you are inherent in the present situation and inseparable from it and no change of administrative personnel is likely to prove an effective remedy. Let the Indo-Pakistan dispute be finally resolved and the Muslims, knowing that road to Pakistan is closed to them for good, will settle down to an undisturbed peaceful life as the five crores of Muslims do in India. Then all the ugly things you complain of will vanish like mist before the morning sun. Then—and not till then—will be the time to take up in right earnest your great programme of raising the cultural level of the people.

(8) It is gratifying to note that in the booklet India does come in for a word of appreciation from your pen, a refreshing contrast to the position taken up by you in *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir* where you tar India with a thick brush and, in effect, represent Pakistan as milk-white lamb in comparison. That is my impression and I hope you will excuse me to give expression to it.

(9) You seem to suggest that it is India which puts curbs on the civil liberties of the people, but I think that in the mutual relationship of India and Kashmir it is the tail that wags the dog and not the reverse. But this phenomenon, as also the grievances of the Kashmir Pandits and all other symptoms of malaise are, as said above, inherent in the instability of the present situation.

Thanking you again,

Yours affectionately,
Sridhar Kaul

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi—16
March 19, 1963

Shri Sridhar Kaul Dulloo
Rainawari
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Masterji,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 10 instant and am glad to note that you have critically gone through my pamphlet on Kashmir.

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As you will not have failed to observe, though I continue to believe in the principle of self-determination my views on the accession dispute have undergone a change and today I have little hesitation in agreeing with you that "in the best interests of the people, both Muslims and Hindus, the State should continue to be an integral part of India". But I have no doubt in my mind that this affiliation can prove beneficial only if it is effected with the voluntary support of the Kashmir people. If the large majority of the Kashmiris is opposed to the accession on whatever grounds, it is sooner or later bound to end in disaster. Our main concern, therefore, should be to find out the ways and means of enlisting such support of the State people, especially of Kashmiri Muslims, No doubt it is a hard and arduous task, a steep ascent but the path has to be traversed. I do not think it is impossible to achieve this end provided we are convinced of its importance and have the patience to labour for it.

You think that but for the sinister propaganda of Pakistan the Kashmiri Muslims would "live contented with their lot as citizens of India". I dismiss the implication that with the disappearance of Pakistan support Kashmir Muslims will become dispirited and can then be cowed down. You are incapable of cherishing any such base motive. But I found many non-Muslims holding this view which to me appears erroneous and born of wishful thinking. I have no desire to underestimate the influence that Pakistan propaganda exercises on the minds of Kashmiri Muslims but my study of the situation in the Valley has led me to believe that there are other reasons too for the Muslims, particularly the politically-conscious among them, to harbour hostility against India and desire to be with Pakistan. Suppression of free thought and unprecedented political persecution are driving the Muslims straight into the lap of Pakistan. India has done nothing during the past 16 years to set the matters right in this behalf; indeed, New Delhi has directly encouraged the acts of Kashmir Government meant to abridge the civil liberties of the people.

Throughout History subject nations have had sympathisers from outside for their cause. India too had several nations on her side during the days of freedom struggle. Interestingly

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enough, Hitler's Germany and Tojo's Japan were two of them. Even among the Englishmen there were liberals and groups to uphold the Indian claim for liberty. Diehard Tories disliked this outside support for Indians but freedom lovers everywhere appreciated it. Like Germany and Japan in case of India, Pakistan is not unselfish and her method of support is not free from blame. Nevertheless, I see no justification for its downright denunciation. The best way of rendering Pakistan's sinister propaganda ineffective is to make the Kashmir people really contented and happy.

Despite my acute disappointment at the political developments in Pakistan and the dismal failure of democratic trends in that country, I refuse to accept the aspersion that the Muslims are more religion-ridden or fanatical than the Hindus. I can easily imagine a parallel case where Hindus, similarly placed as Muslims are in Kashmir, would feel equally agitated and excited by the religious shibboleths of Hindu leaders. Some inkling of such behaviour we had in Hyderabed and Junagarh when the freedom of the Hindu majorities was jeopardised in the two states by the machinations of the Muslim rulers with or without the connivance of Pakistan. It is difficult for me to agree with your statement that if the ruler of Kashmir would have been a Muslim, the 1931 agitation would never have been launched. Unless you hold that the Muslims in other lands are qualitatively different from those of the Indian Muslims there are histories of Turkey, Egypt and Iran to challenge your assertion. Under a Muslim nawab we can imagine the 1931 agitation taking different form—perhaps a healthier one--but nevertheless it would have been a struggle of enslaved people for their liberation from the domination of a despot. This is on the assumption that the Muslim rule would have been as tyrannical as the Dogra Raj. I have had the extraordinary good luck of coming in close contact with both politically-conscious Hindus and Muslims during the major part of my active life. Shedding the prejudices to which I am heir as one born in a high caste Hindu family, I daresay that communal virus has equally infected the lives of Hindus and Muslims all over the subcontinent. The more closely and

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dispassionately I have studied the behaviour of Hindus and Muslims as individuals or members of their respective communities, the more convinced I have felt that little difference exists between them so far as influence of religion and nationality on their everyday life is concerned.

Your conclusion that "until India arrives at a final settlement with Pakistan over the accession issue the present atmosphere of doubt, uncertainty and suspense will persist" is alas true. Unfortunately this stark reality is too often forgotten by the men in power no less than by the people at large in India and Kashmir. Until the Chinese invasion from the North, Nehru and his colleagues frequently pretended that there was no Kashmir problem.

You have not indicated what the nature of settlement can be under the circumstances where both parties have to be appeased. If rightly or wrongly plebiscite is ruled out as an instrument of settlement and the continuation of the present position considered to be the most desirable solution, the only course left is that Pakistan should be made to accept the cease-fire line (probably with minor adjustments) as the international boundary. Frankly speaking, it is beyond my comprehension how any intelligent man can believe that this is possible. Apart from the fact that Muslim opinion in the Valley justifies the persistence of Pakistan in demanding Kashmir's accession with or without plebiscite, I believe that no Government in that country—not even a dictatorial one—has the ghost of a chance to survive if somehow it can be successfully persuaded to withdraw the claim. I do not blame the successive Pakistan Governments for raising storm over Kashmir. My changed view about accession has in no way made me to deny the justifiability of Pakistan's case over the Valley. Pakistanis understandably feel wronged and become almost wild when it is suggested to them to leave Kashmir alone. Any Hindu Government would have behaved similarly in like conditions. We should not forget what happened in Goa and how the Congress Government annexed it.

Having rejected the plebiscite and decided to retain the Valley, India leaves no common ground between herself and

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Pakistan on which to base an amicable settlement. I am afraid the current negotiations for ending the dispute are thus doomed to fail. And this will inevitably open another chapter of bitterness and acrimony, of mutual accusations and vituperations. There can be no abatement in Pakistan propaganda of which you complain so vehemently; it may only be expected to be more virulent in future. We have, therefore, to seek some other way of stabilising Kashmir politics and bringing sanity to the situation with which we are confronted. It is to the achievement of this aim that I have directed my attention in the pamphlet.

In saying that only after the final settlement is arrived at with Pakistan "will be the time to take up in right earnest your great programme of raising the cultural level of the people" you are, I feel, putting the cart before the horse. Raising the cultural level of the people is needed to awaken their critical faculty, to make them fit to understand the pros and cons of the accession issue and to understand the blessings that will be conferred on them by Kashmir becoming an integral part of the Indian Republic. If the Kashmiris remain on the present low cultural level guided only by religious prejudices and led by chauvinistic ideals, the accession dispute can never be settled. Inciting speeches of fanatics from across the border will have strong appeal and the Valley will remain a festering sore in the body politic of India. The importance and urgency of the task I have set is thus quite obvious; it cannot brook any delay.

A seemingly valid doubt about the plan is that it will take decades to implement it because thinking and behaviour of a people cannot be improved in days or years; it takes ages. That is a counsal of despair. By waiting for 16 long years to have a settlement of the accession dispute we have already wasted much precious time. Had we had the wisdom to start on this path right from 1947 some progress could have been registered by now. But today we are no nearer the goal of Kashmir's integration with India and, what is more depressing, there are no signs that India is ready to discard the policy which has brought us into this blind alley.

With profound respects,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Rainawari,
Srinagar, Kashmir
March 26, 1963

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
Gash Agur
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

Many thanks for your letter of March 19. I take up my pen to touch upon some of the points raised in it; not for the fun of indulging in polemics but only to give a more lucid expression to my views on these than perhaps I have been able to do in my last letter.

To enlist the whole-hearted support of the Kashmiri Muslims for the accession is patently the ideal solution of the accession problem. But if we believe that the removal of Kashmir's present-day aches and the acquiscence of its people in a reformed, purified and blameless regime under the aegis of India will seal the mouth of Pakistan, we shall be reckoning without the host. And even though the people at large may be happy and contented under India, the ceaseless diatribes of Pakistan will continue to agitate and perturb the majority of the Muslims while a section of them will never be reconciled to Kashmir's association with India. Hence a fool-proof solution can be possible only when India, Pakistan and the Muslims of Kashmir are agreed over one. It goes without saying that even if the Muslims of Kashmir have all that they desire in association with India, in a plebiscite their vote will go overwhelmingly in favour of Pakistan.

It is not in order to benefit the Kashmir Muslims that Pakistan is crying itself hoarse. It does so in pursuit of its own interests and the Kashmir Muslims, too, knowing full well that they will be worse off under Pakistan, choose out of a sense of duty to their religion, to sacrifice their personal interests to have the emotional satisfaction of being the citizens of an Islamic state and of being contributors to its increased power and extent. Apart from the loss of civic and political rights — so conspicuously absent in Pakistan — which they will inevitably suffer on transfer to that State, the affluence they have experienced under India will vanish like a dream. Even a fraction of the colossal sum that India has so far spent on the develop-

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ment of Kashmir, if earmarked by Pakistan for a similar purpose, would entail a tremendous strain on its economy which it could hardly afford to bear. Granting that the suppression of civil liberties, to whatever extent existing in Kashmir, is driving the Muslims to desperation, can they expect a greater measure of freedom in Pakistan which is under the heels of an undisguised dictatorship and bids fair to remain so indefinitely in future? Here in Kashmir they are as a community ruling the roost while the non-Muslims in Pakistan are virtually living on sufference. For, we have to remember that Kashmir is, for all practical purpose, an independent state as far as the internal administration of the State is concerned which means that the Kashmir Muslims can have everything their own way while India has to foot enormous bills for defence and development of the State. What the right-minded among the Muslims desire is that jobbery, corruption and suppression of civil liberties should cease and this objective can be effectively achieved only when a settlement is arrived at with Pakistan and the bogey of Pakistan sabotage which serves as a smoke-screen to the aberrations of persons at the helm is laid to rest once for all.

I never meant that the Kashmir Muslims should be cowed down into submission by military force, as have been the people of Tibet by China and of Hungary by Russia, the nations of the world finding themselves pathetically helpless to rescue these unfortunate peoples from the military might of the two colossi. I meant that the Muslims of Kashmir enjoying, as they do, an unprecedented economic prosperity and the fullest religious and cultural freedom and being virtually the masters of the State under India's shadow sovereignty, would be content with their present status, even as 5 crores of Muslims even with their extra-territorial loyalties are, in India, if Pakistan did not keep up its barrage of fiery appeals to their religious sentiment.

Personally I think it was wrong on Pandit Nehru's part to take over Kashmir without the people's formal sanction behind that act. I have it on good authority that all his cabinet colleagues, chief among them Sardar Patel, were bitterly opposed to such a course and only gave way when he crowned his forceful

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arguments with an emotional outburst. And he was impelled to this course because of his personal regard for and faith in Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. He believed that Sheikh Abdullah *was* Kashmir and that Kashmir really spoke through him. That only was his justification for accepting Kashmir's accession. He was confident that with Sheikh Sahib on his side he would sweep the polls in a plebiscite.

The universe revolves around the self—be it the individual, the social, the national, the religious, the humanitarian or the ideological self. The degree of emphasis on these various selves and their permutations and combinations differs with different peoples. Turkey was prostrate at the end of the First World War and might have been parcelled out among the European nations, if Kemal Ata Turk had not saved it by abolisling the tottering caliphate and modernising the country. The Sultan was given short shrift, because otherwise the country would have been dismembered and the power of Islam in Europe would have received its finishing blow. Egypt, Iraq, and Syria fall under the same category in respect of the upheavals that have been witnessed in these countries. They stand for Pan-Arbism, designed to promote the solidarity of Muslim power in the Middle East and not far removed from the establishment of a new type of panislamism which Pakistan tried to bring into being not so very long ago. That they will direct their combined strength against Israel is not a distant possibility. A person like the Nizam who cannot afford to contribute to the defence of India which has given him all his fabulous wealth, but who can give away millions for the propagation of Islam in England would, if Destiny had placed him on the throne of Kashmir, have received unstinted homage not only from the Muslims of Kashmir but have also been universally acclaimed throughout the Islamic world. However, as this is mere speculation and has no bearing on the present situation, let us agree to differ.

You quote Hyderabad and Junagarh as instances of the objectionable behaviour of the Hindu leaders "when the freedom of Hindu majorities was jeopardised in the two states". Surely you do not mean to imply that the Hindu leaders should

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have played the role of mere spectators while the freedom of the people concerned was being made a marketable commodity in the interests of their rulers and Pakistan. In the case of Kashmir, India, as you know, would not accept even a standstill agreement at the request of the ruler and only accepted the accession provisionally when the leader of the greatest political organisation in the State supported the ruler's request and this accession was subject to confirmation by the will of the people to be ascertained later on.

I am sorry I cannot accept your view that in the matter of intolerance the Hindu is as great a sinner as the Muslim. It was Hindu India that received with open arms the Parsis driven out of their native land by Islamic persecution. We have to remember that the semetic faiths are an absolute antithesis of Arya Dharmas (Hinduism and Buddhism) in the matter of tolerance. Latterly of course a degree of intolerance has crept into the thinking of a section of the Hindus but this is mostly a reaction of the aggressive communalism of the Muslims. A discussion on this point in detail is unpleasant business but I would remind you in passing of the unprovoked havoc wrought a few years back on Mirzai Muslims in the Islamic state of Pakistan merely for their unorthodox interpretation of certain doctrines of Islam. About 40 lakhs of Hindus have been compelled to leave their hearth and home in East Pakistan under the most distressing conditions. Have we witnessed a similar exodus of Muslims from India ?

Turning to the vital issue that confronts India, Kashmir and Pakistan, the only practicable way out of the morass, is, as you rightly say, the acceptance by both parties of the present cease-fire line with minor adjustments as the boundary between Azad Kashmir and Indian Kashmir. Obviously neither side can abandon its position to the extent demanded by its adversary without incurring grave risks and the possible consequences of a plebiscite to which, in the abstract, I have no objection, are apt to give one the creeps. If eventually Kashmir must go to Pakistan, our Muslim brethren will have—speaking relatively—exchanged prosperity for penury and freedom for chains. They will find, too late, that they have exchanged king log for king stork.

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As to your programme who can there be that will not accord it whole-hearted welcome? That programme is as indispensable to the health of the national soul as fresh air is to that of the physical organism and it will never cease to be a vital need however much we advance. Even countries with a high cultural standard have organs designed to foster and promote cultural development to ever higher levels. For, the vistas of cultural development are as infinite as space and we can never have enough of enlightenment. Your programme, therefore is as much a need of today as of tomorrow and of the distant future. If then I said that the execution of the programme should wait until a settlement of the accession issue was reached, it was for two reasons. First, in their present sullen mood and mental distraction, the people would perhaps not be inclined to listen and the seed would fall on barren soil. Secondly, if the land goes over to Pakistan, now the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, it may not be tolerated at all. In this context I am reminded of the famous dictum of caliph Omar when he ordered the burning of the library at Alexandria. When the keepers of the library protested that the books in the library said the same thing as the Quran, he retorted : "In that case they are useless and if they say things contrary to the teachings of the Quran, they cannot be allowed to exist". For an Islamic state like Pakistan all such porgrammes are already there in the Quran and no man-made programme having a bearing on ethical values can have the ghost of a chance to survive there.

Although it delights me immensely to be in contact with you through correspondence, I am positively averse to our contacts developing controversies which in the context of the Kashmir problem, can have only an academic value. The thing to be discussed was your booklet and the clouds of controversy have obscured it from view for a time. I have no hesitation to admit that it is an opportune and valuable contribution to the improvement of the present internal situation in Kashmir. With your accustomed forthrightness you have laid the finger on the sore spots and ordinarily one should expect this to facilitate a cure. If this cure does become an accomplished fact, the

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people will undoubtedly be relieved of their oppressive tension in respect of the administration, but that is not going to impress Pakistan whose only objective is to grab Kashmir, whatever privations that act may bring to the people of the land.

Yours as ever,
Sridhar Kaul

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
April 16, 1963

Shri Sridhar Kaul Dulloo,
Rainawari,
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Masterji,

I have to thank you for your letter of the 26th ultimo which I read with deep interest. As long as controversies enable us to clarify our views on subjects under discussion, I do not see any harm in continuing them ; indeed, friendly controversies make sensible people understand each other better ; only they should be cautious not to allow bitterness enter into arguments nor should they impute motives to each other for holding opinions. I think there is not the remotest possibility of this happening in our case because, despite differences on diverse matters, we have never misunderstood each other in the past.

Your views, otherwise so lucid, are not clear to me in one important respect. You want Kashmir to remain as part of India and are against its accession to Pakistant. You believe that if a plebiscite is held the vote of Muslims in any case will go overwhelmingly in favour of Pakistan. You think that the diatribes of Pakistan against India will never cease "even though the people (of Kashmir) at large may be happy and contented under India". Yet, strangely enough, you have been insisting that a solution of the Kashmir problem "can be possible only when India, Pakistan and the Muslims of Kashmir are agreed over one". For me this is confusing.

As I have frequently stated, I believe Pakistan's claim over Kashmir is not unjustified. Pakistanis have a legitimate

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grievance that though the subcontinent was divided on religious grounds they were deprived, through a strategem, of Kashmir which is predominantly populated by Muslims. Had India been able to wean away the Muslim population of the Valley from pro-Pakistan leanings during the past sixteen years a settlement with Pakistan for maintaining the status quo and making the cease-fire line as the international boundary could be within the realm of possibility today. For reasons which I have tried to explain in the pamphlet, India failed to seize the opportunity ; indeed, through certain misconceived policies conditions have been created in the State making Muslims sullen and bitter instead of contented and happy as they should have been after the expenditure of enormous sums on the economic development of the country. Pakistan is fully aware of the Indian failure and I cannot understand what cajolery can persuade her to come to a settlement in which she is denied the possession of the State, at any rate of those regions where Muslims are in the majority. It would be naive to think that Pakistan can ever put her seal of approval to a settlement which deprives her of the Valley. If India is determined to keep the Valley it is futile to make attempts to end the dispute through a settlement with Pakistan. Nothing—not even Anglo-American pressure—can induce her to give up this attitude.

You entertain little doubt about the religious attachment of Kashmiri Muslims to Pakistan and you know how fanatically Pakistan is bent upon having Kashmir by hook or by crook; yet you pin your hope on a settlement through India, Pakistan and the Muslims of Kashmir and, amazingly, you want this settlement to be according to your wishes. How you can visualise its possibility escapes my comprehension. If we cannot subject ourselves to the test of a plebiscite to determine the future of Kashmir, common sense would advise that we should leave Pakistan altogether out of the picture.

If the Kashmir Muslims persist to have faith in Pakistan and cannot be made to see the good they can have by remaining with India the only method to maintain the status quo is rule by coercion, suppression and denial of all civil liberties.

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The people shall have to be cowed down as I think they are to a considerable extent at present. When I pointed out this to you in my last letter you, not unexpectedly, retorted that you could never think of suppression but only wanted that "the Muslims of Kashmir enjoying as they do an unprecedented economic prosperity and the fullest religious and cultural freedom and being virtually the masters of the State under India's shadowy suzerainty, would be content with their present status even as 5 crores of Muslims, even with their extra territorial loyalties, are in India". Now this omnibus statement, besides being based on wishful thinking, contains a contradiction and takes certain situations for granted.

The Kashmir Muslims are no doubt better off today than they were ever before but economic prosperity, social, cultural and religious freedom and even political power have no substance if they are not accompanied by freedom of thought and unrestricted expression of ideas. There is a lurking fear in the minds of the common people which is not groundless that this pampering of the Muslims by India is occasioned by the existence of the accession dispute. If per chance the issue is settled, India allowed to retain the State permanently and Pakistan compelled to be silent the Kashmir scene will entirely change, the artificial structure will disappear and the Muslims will descend to the position of a subject race. Your statement about the Indian Muslims is not borne out by facts. You admit they entertain extra-territorial loyalty which in itself is a sufficient proof of their discontent. And if you think they are in any way happy under the present dispensation you are, I am afraid, sadly out of touch with the realities of the situation and mostly indulging in wishful thinking.

I need not tire you with voluminous evidence which I possess regarding the helpless and pitiable circumstances to which the Indian Muslims have been reduced since independence ; but it would surely interest you to learn what a staunch nationalist Muslim whose sincerity and loyalty to India is beyond reproach, has to say on this subject. Imploring the Indian industrialists to recruit Muslims in their undertakings Mr. Badr-ud-din Tayabji, Vice-Chancellor Aligarh

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University, recently observed : "After partition so far as the forty odd million Muslims left in India are concerned the position has become much worse than previously. As years pass by the number of Muslims left over in Government employment from pre-partition days lessens due to retirement or other reasons. This is becoming more marked because their retirements are not being matched by any corresponding intake of fresh Muslim recruits". (*Statesman*, 12-4-1963). Mr Tayabji has touched only the problem of Muslim employment but to any unbiassed student of current affairs the condition of the Muslims in other spares would appear no better.

If Kashmiri Muslims read their future under India's "shadowy" suzerainty, as you choose to call it, after the settlement of the accession dispute in the present status of the Muslims living in the rest of India who can blame them for doing so?

Now, despite all this, I am as earnest as you are that Kashmir should continue to remain with India and I have different reasons for desiring so. The developments and happenings in Pakistan after the partition have deeply disappointed me and I have become very pessimistic about the future of democracy in that country. But what is good for Pakistan is the concern of the Pakistanis. I shall mind my own business. Among other things I believe that Kashmir's accession to India will prove conducive to the welfare of the subcontinent and help in constructing a democratic setup in the State. Nevertheless, about one thing I am quite clear in my mind. If we fail to convince the Kashmiri Muslims that their cherished ideals can be attained only if they decide to throw in their lot with India and if they continue to insist on acceding to Pakistan they should be allowed to do so; it is dangerous to retain them in the present position by physical force against their will. After all, Kashmir is only an insignificant part of the wide world. However ardent patriots we might be, we owe something to humanity and cannot therefore shut our eyes to the fact that the unsettled problem of Kashmir is proving a running sore poisoning the good neighbourly relations of India and Pakistan and harming the progress of humanity

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at large. In any case it is bad to be a myopic lover of one's homeland; it is particularly so in this case.

But as I have repeatedly stated there is no cause to lose hope in our endeavours to make the Kashmir Muslims realize that the dreams they have cherished for several decades to free their country from medieval despotism and religious obscurantism can be fulfilled by living in the co-operative commonwealth of the Indian Republic. By voluntarily deciding to remain with India the Kashmir Muslims can not only democratise their own social system but will also be instrumental in ameliorating the forlorn lot of the four hundred million of the Muslims living in thc 15 Indian States. Only faith in our Muslim compatriots, a sympathetic study of Islam and a liberal view of Islamic History can help us in achieving this objective.

It is my deep regret that I profoudly and fundamentally disagree with you on the findings regarding the philosophy and history of Islam. I belong to that class of students who believe that Islam has played a great historic role in disseminating knowledge among the ignorant and in civilising the culturally backward people of various parts of the world. "One must not obey the law of religion without reflecting and knowing its truth. Theology should be subject to investigation and based upon rationalistic foundations and logical conclusions", such is the teaching of the Muslim philosophers. Like other revolutionary movements, Islam fell on bad days and Muslim divines advocated obscurantism makIng Islam a vehicle of tyranny and oppression. Unhappily it is true that the Indian Muslims have mostly followed the path shown by such preachers, for Islam reached our land when it had shed its revolutionary character and given up its progressive role. But that will not and does not detract from the greatness of Islam for the laudable work it did for the good of humanity.

Enemies of progress and enlightenment have spread calumnies to defame and discredit the great leaders of Islam, especially the Prophet and the caliphs but most of the allegations have been challenged and disproved. One such is that about Omar to which you have referred in your letter. In his famous

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book *The Decline and Fall of Roman Empire* the celeberated and impartial historian, Edward Gibbon, has questioned the statement attributed to Omar originally by Abulpharagius and subsequently repeated parrot-like by other historians. Through impartial enquiry Gibbon has shown that Abulpharagius who was a stranger in Egypt wrote his book in Media after almost six hundred years while two other Christian annalists, one of them the patriarch Etychius who amply described the conquest of Alexandria, did not even mention the alleged vandalism. This is remarkable since both of them belonged to Egypt and lived much earlier than Abulpharagius.

Gibbon aptly reminds us that "the rigid sentence of Omar is repugnant to the sound and orthodox precept of the Mohhammedan casuists for they expressly declare that 'the religious books of the Jews and Christians, which are acquired by the right of war should never be committed to the flames and that the works of profane science, historians or poets, physicians or philosophers may be lawfully applied to the use of the faithful' ".

It is the considered opinion of Gibbon that much of the treasure house of learning at Alexandria was consumed by the "mischievous bigotry of the Christians, who studied to destroy the monuments of idolatry". Unhappily, the average educated Indian draws his knowledge of Muslim History from sources which are inimical to the faith of Islam and refuses to learn from where truth can be had very easily.

Be that as it may, I hold that it is the responsibility of the Kashmiris like you and me who sincerely believe that for the good of both Muslims and Hindus the Valley should permanently become a part of India, to influence public opinion and bring it round in favour of India. In my pamphlet on Kashmir, I have outlined a programme of work for the attainment of this aim. I am very happy that you think my suggestions can facilitate a cure of the sores from which the society suffers in Kashmir. I am in no way worried about Pakistan. With all my fundamental difference with you on the approach to the problem as stated above, I am in full agreement with you that nothing is going to impress Pakistan not even the

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complete satisfaction of the State Muslims in every sphere of life. As you say, "Pakistan's only objective is to grab Kashmir whatever privations the act may bring to the people of the land". It is for this reason that I propose to leave Pakistan alone and suggest bending our energies to get the administration streamlined and the civil liberties fully restored to the people. I have full faith in the discriminative capabilities of the Kashmiris. I believe they can be made to understand what is good and what is bad for them. You seem to doubt this and forget that if this faith is lost we have no case in Kashmir. In accepting that the Kashmiris will ever remain attached to Pakistan we are virtually owning defeat and spiritually handing over Kashmir to Pakistan, the very thing that we are at pains to avoid.

I trust you are keeping good health and I have not put you to an avoidable strain by tempting you to enter into this lengthy correspondence. During the past months I had been expecting you to come to Delhi and give me the pleasure of rewarding talks as last year. But it seems circumstances prevented you from making the trip; and it is too late now.

With profound respects and warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Rainawari
Srinagar
April 25, 1963

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8 Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

Many thanks for your letter of April 16.

The University Grants Commission has appointed me a member of the committee they have set up to examine the question of providing facilities for higher education for the people of border areas. The first meeting of the committee is going to be held on 4th May and I have been asked to attend it. We shall, therefore, have a chance to discuss things in

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person and I content myself here with just a brief reference to some of the points raised in your letter on which, it seems, I have not been able to make myself quite clear.

First of all let me assure you that for me to misunderstand your motives is altogether outside the realm of possibility and this, I presume, is equally true in the reverse direction. That acrimony should ever mar the sweet sincerity of our discussions is inconceivable.

I believe we are agreed on essentials as outlined hereunder:

(1) We both hold that in the best interests of Kashmir and Kashmiris, our land should remain a part of India.

(2) Pakistan can never be expected to abandon its claim to Kashmir. Short of being made the master of the Valley, it will accept no solution, however equitable it may be or however beneficial to the people of the land.

(3) A clean administration which respects the fundamental rights of the people and in no way hinders them in the exercise of civil liberties is a sine-qua-non of every welfare state in all circumstances and still more so—if that expression be permissible in the context of the present situation—in case of Kashmir.

(4) No decision should be forced down the throat of the Kashmiri Muslims; Kashmir's accession to India should be sealed as final by their free choice.

(5) It is true that no organized attempt has been made to win over the people to the side of India or to wean them away from their pro-Pakistan leanings.

(6) India has no chance of success in a plebiscite.

We, however, disagree in one important particular: You believe that if the administration is cleaned up and civil liberties are allowed a free-play, the Muslims may reconcile themselves to Indian citizenship, but I differ. I think, on the contrary, that as long as Pakistan does not shut its mouth the *Mislims* of Kashmir will continue to be restive and restless.

When I say that a fool-proof solution could be possible only if India, Pakistan and the Muslims of Kashmir were agreed over one, I mean that this would be the ideal which

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evidently is unattainable. How I wish that a plebiscite had been held simultaneously with the partition of the country and the dispute settled once for all in the light of the result.

Yes, India was divided on the basis of the two-nation theory—Pandit Nehru's disavowal notwithstanding—but this principle was not carried to its logical conclusion. It was the U.P. Muslims who were the principal architect of Pakistan, but they carry on comfortably in India and the minority problem which Pakistan was intended to solve remains as baffling as it was in the pre-partition days. I am told that Mr. Jinnah had suggested an exchange of populations but had been answered with an incredulous smile by Gandhiji.

The other points raised in your letter can be discussed when we meet.

That the present talks between India and Pakistan will prove abortive and that India will not part with any substantial portion of the territory it holds is fairly certain. Your proposal that Pakistan should be kept out of the picture and all energies bent to remove all doubts, fears and causes of bitterness from the minds of the Muslims is in these circumstances, sound practical politics and I endorse it whole-heartedly.

Yours sincerely,
Sridhar Kaul

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Rainawari
Srinagar
August 3, 1964

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
E/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

Many thanks for the two booklets "Sheikh Abdullah, Kashmir Democracy and Indo-Pak Relations" and "Natural Environment, Political Vicissitudes and People in Kashmir". I must also take the opportunity to thank you for an earlier publication in the series "A Last Chance for India in Kashmir". The last named work is a strong plea for support to the Sadiq Government. The content of this booklet is unexceptionable and must have an irresistible appeal for everybody who believes

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that Kashmir's accession to India is the key to her future progress and prosperity and that in the interest of her welfare it must be maintained and preserved at any cost. The second-named work is an objective survey of the bounties with which Nature has endowed Kashmir, a succinct review of her chequered history, a record of her cultural achievements and an appraisal of the character of her people. A laudable feature of historical review and the assessment of the human material is that there has been no mincing of matters in their presentation.

As for the first-named work, there is nothing in its factual survey of developments since the release of Sheikh Abdullah which will not be readily accepted by close observers of the Kashmir situation and its proposals will undoubtedly strike a responsive chord in the hearts of all well-wishers of Kashmir. Your comment on Sheikh Abdullah's thesis of the establishment of amity between India and Pakistan being the precondition of ending the Kashmir dispute is sound in the abstract as I think, but apparently overlooks the fact that the dispute cannot be said to have ended until Pakistan is satisfied and that the people, which means the Muslims, in their present mood will make short shrift of any leader who holds up before them "communal harmony, social democracy and abiding peace" as the immediate objective. Moreover, there is little hope for Sheikh Abdullah and other Muslim leaders accepting that counsel of perfection and thereby putting their leadership in jeopardy, particularly when there is a rival leader who unequivocally proclaims that the only alternatives before the people are accession to India or accession to Pakistan and that a third course is inconceivable which in plain words means that Kashmir in his view must become a part of Pakistan. We have to remember in this connection that Maulana Farooq, the avowed protagonist of Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, commands as great a following as the Sheikh and the moment the latter takes up the constructive programme suggested by you which in effect means acceptance of status quo and accession to India, there is bound to be a landslide in favour of the Maulana. The crux of the whole matter is that the Muslims here are motivated in their choice by pure religious senti-

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ment and not by political or economic considerations and since the relic episode the Muslim mass mind has been poisoned through and through with fanatical intolerance and inveterate hatred of the Hindu minority which is regarded as the only hurdle in the way of the appropriation of Kashmir by Pakistan. Till lately the one complaint that these people could have against India was the suppression of civil liberties and corruption in the administration. Now that civil liberties have been restored and a clean administrative set-up at the top established, that complaint no longer exists. But will this wholesome change reconcile the Kashmiri Muslim to the Indian accession ? The answer is emphatically "No".

I am told you are coming up here shortly and I am looking forward to the pleasure of meeting you.

Yours sincerely,
Sridhar Kaul

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
August 26, 64

Shri Sridhar Kaul Dulloo
Rainawari
Srinagar (Kashmir)

My dear Masterji,

I am sorry for this delay in acknowledging your letter of the 3rd August.

The suggestions I have been making in the booklets may be a counsel of perfection in some respect, but I think there can be no better practical politics conducive to the peace and happiness of Kashmir and its people.

Regarding your observations on the fanatical outlook of the Muslims I may refer you to my fifth pamphlet just out dealing with the Kashmiri Pandit politics, a copy of which I am posting to you separately.

If we could exercise the demon of communalism from the Pandit community, I have no doubt that it would produce healthy and desirable effect on the minds of the Muslims.

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I shall feel happy to have your comments on the new booklet. With respect and regards.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Rainawari
Srinagar
September 26, 1964

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

Many thanks for your letter of 26th August, 1964 followed some days later by the booklet "Thoughts on the Future of Kashmiri Pandits"

The main thesis of the booklet is surely unexceptionable, but certain observations which have gone into building it up are, to my mind, open to question.

The conversion of the Muslim Conference into the National Conference in bringing about which epochal event you played an important role was, I think, dictated in the last analysis, by what the Muslim leaders conceived to be the interests of the Muslim community. In plain words these interests lay in the substitution of Muslim rule for the Hindu monarchy. They secularized the label of the Muslim Conference in order to use the Indian National Congress as a catspaw for ousting the Maharaja. Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah revealed in confidence this purpose of his alliance with the Congress to Jinnah during his stay at Srinagar and the latter made a clean breast of it in a public speech which he delivered at Jama Masjid soon afterwards.

It was the Indian National Congress which financed the National Conference and lent it ustinted moral and material support in its campaign launched to supplant the Maharaja. The Muslim League kept sulkily aloof throughout that campaign. The National Conference appeared in its true colours from the very day of its birth and that was why even you had to part company with it. And when it stepped into the seat

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of power it lost no time to square accounts with the Kashmiri Pandits. Their economic roots were cut with utter ruthlessness and while the doors of the services and other avenues of economic life were hermetically sealed against them in the land of their birth, steps were taken to debar them from obtaining employment in India also.

The National Conference opted for accession to India, firstly because it had grown in the lap of the Indian National Congresss and could not conceivably have grafted itself onto the unresponsive, even unfriendly, stem of Pakistan ; secondly, because its leaders knew that they would find short shrift in the absolutism of that land and, thirdly, because they could foresee that accession to Pakistan would mean the dominance of the Punjab Muslims over the native population with all the concomitant evils unseparable from such relationship and, fourthly, because, as a part of Pakistan, Kashmir would be driven into economic doldrums. The development witnessed by Kashmir under India's fostering care—and this despite misappropriations and defalcations here—would have been unimaginable if this land had been made over to Pakistan. As it is, I don't think the Muslims of Kashmir have any reason to be disgruntled over their present lot. All the talk of secularism notwithstanding, the Government is essentially a Muslim Government and a Kashmiri Muslim Government at that ; they enjoy all the previleges of a ruling community and have a measure of prosperity they cannot dream of in Pakistan. All that India is doing in the exercise of its nebulous overlordship is that it defends the State against external danger and spends enormous sums to finance its development in all departments of national life.

When the Muslim leaders were still unsure of their future, they found it profitable to reject Pakistan's claim outright but when they found their feet, they had no qualms in disowning India. The fact is that they do not really want the merger of the State with Pakistan ; what they ardently desire is to make Kashmir an autonomous State with themselves at its head. This is not a new development. Not long after the National Conference came into power, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah declared

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in a meeting at Rainawari in which I was present that the only solution of the Kashmir problem was that the State should be recognized as independent by both India and Pakistan and this is the goal he has in view today.

You seem to suggest that the Kashmiri Pandits were the accomplices of Bakshi Gulam Mohammed in his campaign of suppression and repression against pro-Pakistan elements. You forget that Kashmiri Pandits were themselves the victims of merciless persecution and unabashed discrimination and, if anything, it was they who needed the support and sympathy of the majority community. The Kashmiri Pandits did bring sad tale of their woes and sufferings to the ears of the Indian leaders, but to no effect.

You refer to the existence of harmonious relations between the Muslims and Pandits of Kashmir in olden times. Life is a dynamic process and everything in the world is subject to ceaseless change. The Kashmiri Muslim of today is not a carbon copy of his forefathers, even as the Chinese of today are an antithesis of their ancestors of only a few hundred years ago. Not to recount what happened during the tribal raids, I will refer you to a recent incident revealing the present-day mentality of the Kashmiri Muslim. To fraternize with their Muslim compatriots, the Kashmiri Pandits completely identified themselves with the agitation of the Muslims for the recovery of the Hazratbal relic and even took out big processions in support of the same. But when the agitation was over posters appeared in all parts of the city expressing Muslim appreciation of the Pandit's co-operation in the agitation, but advising them in all seriousness to vacate the land in the interests of their own safety. This, the posters said, was a timely warning, for the kafir and the momin could in no case live together. But when all this is said and done, your exhortation to the Kashmiri Pandits is undeniably sage and sound. I wish, however, that the Muslims of India were simultaneously persuaded to exert themselves to convert the Kashmiri Muslims to a pro-India stand.

*With best wishes and sincere regards,*

Yours sincerely,

Sridhar Kaul

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
3rd October, 1964

Shri Sridhar Kaul Dulloo
Rainawari,
Srinagar (Kashmir)

Me dear Masterjee,

I have to thank you for your long letter of the 26th ultimo commenting on my booklet about the future of Kashmiri Pandits.

It is obvious that we are looking at Kashmir politics from two different angles and no wonder we arrive at different conclusions.

You are free to cherish your views but what surprises me is that a learned person like you should hold the entire community of Muslims responsible for the deeds or misdeeds of an individual or a group of individuals.

If Abdullah made a foolish statement in the past or a few mischief-mongers issued an anti-Pandit poster last year, you seem to be sure that this is the considered opinion of the Muslims. How you come to such conclusion passes my comprehension. I beg to point out that this kind of reasoning is hardly fair.

I never said that Kashmiri Pandits were not the victims of the misrule ; indeed, I have stated that they suffered equally and in certain respects more than the Muslims. What pained me was that they connived at the policy of suppression as long as it affected only Muslims. The Pandit representation to the Indian leaders never included a word about the miserable condition of the Muslims and the people in general ; they only bemoaned their own sad lot.

I have written two more bookets the last ones in the series. One of these "Our Task in Kashmir" you will get within a few days ; the second one entitled" The Dialogue Between Mirwaiz Farooq and Sheikh Abdullah" will follow after a week.

I would like to hear your comments on both because it helps me a lot to reconsider my own views.

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I am thinking of paying a short visit to the Valley in the third week of this month. But I hope to receive your letter before departure.

With respectful regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Rainawari,
Srinagar
Oct. 10, 1954.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8 Hauz Khas
New Delhi-16

My dear Prem Nathji,

I received your letter of 3rd October some days back and your booklet "Our Task in Kashmir" only yesterday.

I will first touch upon some of your observations in the aforesaid letter.

No question of learning is involved in what one sees with one's eyes and hears with one's ears. It is a matter of pure experience and being on spot, I think, I am better placed for objective survey of the situation. The wearer best knows where the shoe pinches him. I do not mean that all Muslims are victims of a religious mania or that all Pandits are angels of peace and tolerance. What I mean to say is that religious sentiment is a decisive factor in shaping the political thought of the Muslims and that at present a majority of them have fixed upon accession to Pakistan as their ultimate political goal. They look upon the Pandits as the only barrier between them and their cherished goal and hence their growing aversion for them. This is a fact which no fanciful construction can explain away. This is why Sheikh Abdullah who seems to favour a secular approach to the problem today is losing ground and Maulvi Farooq is gaining in popularity and power.

I cannot quite understand what you mean when you say, "What pained me was that they, i.e. Pandits connived at the policy of suppression as long as it affected the Muslims". This implies that there was a time when the Pandits were *not suppres-*

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*sed.* I hold, on the contrary, that both Pandits and Muslims sailed in the same boat as far as suppression was concerned and that rather the former were openly discriminated against and subjected to severer persecution and disabilities in other ways. If the powerful Muslim majority whose duty it should have been to protect the Pandit minority, dared not open its mouth to protest against administrative barbarities, how could the feeble Pandit minority be expected to play that role? The majority, on the other hand, took advantage of law and order situation, such as it was, to encroach upon the properties of the Pandits wherever feasible, religious properties receiving special attention in this context. The change that has been effected in the mental constitution and attitude of the Muslims vis-a-vis the Pandits is extremely deplorable, and it will need super-human energy and exertion to undo this mischief that has poisoned the civic life of our land.

If you heard the venomons anti-Pandit slogans that little Muslim children (our future hope) have been taught to utter, you would stand aghast in horror.

The new booklet sets forth a programme calculated to restore spiritual health to our people. There can be no two opinions about the value and utility of such a programme. The present political situation is favourable to its execution. I mean the present regime will welcome a movement having such a laudable aim, while the previous regime would have been suspicious of it. Though surely an uphill task, the moral and spiritual regeneration of our people is the only remedy for all the ills of the land and every endeavour made in this direction will deserve the willing support and assistance of every patriotic soul.

The present regime is motivated by high ideals but because of its difficulties, it has been unable to keep to a straight course now and then. I do not blame it for such unavoidable lapses into which it has been betrayed by the emergencies of sheer self-preservation.

With best wishes and sincere regards,

Yours sincerely,
Sridhar Kaul

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*(C) Between K. L. Kaul and Prem Nath Bazaz.*

Baramulla (Kashmir)
19-4-1964

Shree Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear brother,

Upwards of a month ago I received your letter dated 11th Sept, 1964 and the enclosure. Events are moving in our part of the country so swiftly that unless one happens to be a "yogi" endowed with "spiritual" clairvoyance one is not likely to maintain a fair measure of mental balance needed for objective thinking. With great difficulty I have resisted the temptation of showing to my friends your letter dated 29 February 1964 (to Mr. Sadiq) and had to abandon even the idea of discussion because I feel that whatever my criticism, if any, against your stand I could not put forth your viewpoint better than you have put it in this letter read alongwith your pamphlet.

I do not find much to disagree with you in your analysis except that it does not take into consideration the time lag and the context or rather the background of the Kashmir dispute. We cannot forget that, despite a lapse of seventeen years, the dispute is a residue of the communal question which was fought out in the Indian sub-continent for years prior to the partition. How can ideological conversion take place when the major premises and emotional commitment remain almost unchanged?

Besides, you have suggested that "Sheikh Mohammed. Abdullah should be won over to the "democratic side". This endeavour seems to have failed or there is some foul play somewhere which can be justified by the Sheikh and his conscience-keeper Beg on the oft-quoted ground of everything being fair in love and war (hence politics). This circumstance unless the Sheikh is not being properly quoted or he again changes mind, has tremendously added to Mr. Sadiq's difficulty. Moreover, Bakshi Sahib and his adherents also are not sitting idle. They must be at pains to convince New Delhi that Sadiq has bungled

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and that their stand has been vindicated. It is also problematic how for the Indian Government which is the house divided into factions, can have patience with the progress of events here, more so when the utterances of the recently released leader are bound to be exploited by Pakistan and her supporters in the international field. Can India allow Sadiq sufficient time to cope with the difficulty of no mean magnitude? Your *Radical Humanist* has already raised the alarm of Congress having handed over Kashmir to communists. How far will these forces inside and outside which are allergic even to the name "communism" put up with this contingency also remains to be seen.

I know it is difficult for anybody, however intelligent and well informed, to make accurate political prophecies knowing as we do that history sometimes takes a course which an analyst regards less probable; but in spite of it all I find that your letter is rather non-commital. Whatever turn events may take some lines can be quoted out of it as prophetic. My problem is, all factors considered, which course is history most likely to follow so that, ideals and ultimate values apart, a well-meaning social democrat non-Muslim by birth can adjust his activity in such a manner as to play a useful role (however humble) ; at the same time he may not be trampled over in the jingoistic heat of the moment. In brief, I ask do you still stick to that part of the letter where you say that "in my opinion it is not impossible to keep Kashmir as an integral part of India with the free will of the people provided etc." or do you think the situation has passed the remedy of "sweet reasonableness etc."? or, to quote your words, "it is perhaps already too late".

While I donot want to give an impression that I am panicky, but I am no doubt passing through a period of acute mental conflict the like of which I have never experienced before. I am aware that most of this uneasy state of mind is probably due to private and personal reasons raised to the level of political discussion. But one thing is certain that the matter is no longer academic. Sometimes I think that many Kashmiri Pandits might be having in mind some of their friends and relatives outside where they can migrate. Your

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exile was a blessing in disguise because when you had capacity to work and struggle and elasticity to adjust, you faced hardship. Old age is staring me in the face and I really do not know if I am uprooted at this stage, can I take roots elsewhere for the remaining part of my life which is obviously much shorter than it was say seventeen years ago. Mr. V. is jubilant and thinks that after the withdrawal of Indian military from the scene Kashmiri Pandits will be brought to their senses but I believe he should himself have by now been brought to senses unless of course he thinks in terms of conversion which too will be a very painful experience due to cultural maladjustment.

I am incapable of thinking like RSS minded people that Kashmir must be retained by force or repression or if India is compelled by forces beyond her control to quit, life of Muslims in India should be made so miserable that they are also compelled to quit. Apart from the barbarian character of this suggestion it is on the face of it so absurd due to its impracticability. But Muslims of this place—I mean the thinking sections of the community—are equally narrow-minded. They make no secret of their conception of freedom. To be rid of non-Muslims seems to be one of the fundamentals with their creed. They are not prepared as Mr. Jinnah and his immediate successors were even to pay lip service to a non-communal pattern of state. On the contrary they seem to be confident that the path they so far pursued has paid them and their "success" and "victory" are due to the blessings of Islam. In a word the communal virus has sunk deep into their souls. The Iqbalian philosophy of pan Islamism is bearing fruit. Liberalism appears to be weak weapon against fanaticism. A greater and more uptodate, and somewhat scientific in content, fanaticism as represented by communism, has better chances of working as a solvent of both Hindu and Muslim fanaticism in a backward country like ours than is maturer democracy where freedom has a meaning. We have never tasted freedom and therefore we cannot but welcome authoritarianism of one pattern or the other.

Yours affectionately,

K. L. Kaul

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F/8 Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
April 22, 1964

Shri Kanhya Lal Kaul
Baramulla (Kashmir)

Dear Brother,

I have just received your letter of the 19th instant and was pained to learn about your mental agony.

I do not underrate the tremendousness of the awful times that Pandits are facing in Kashmir but from a man of your intellectual calibre I expect more patience and strength of mind. I think the things are not going to be as dismal as you paint them even if you have to leave Kashmir for good.

About my views on the recent changes I have now written one more pamphlet entitled "A Last Chance for India in Kashmir". You will get it in a couple of days. So I need not dilate any further on the subject in this letter. I would however advise you not to lose nerve and be as brave as you have always been.

You will be interested to know that I met Sheikh Abdullah in Jammu and had long talks with the Sadiq Cabinet over the present situation in the State.

I shall be expecting another letter from you soon. Pray give up your old laziness at least for the present when we are passing through rough time in our life.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Baramulla
Kashmir
2-11-1965.

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Haus Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16

My dear brother,

For quite a long time I got no letter from you. I only got your forwarding note to cuttings from the *Radical Humanist*. You had penned down a few lines saying that you expected a long letter from me.

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Events were moving so fast that soon after writing your three articles in the *Radical Humanist* you must have yourself felt that the opinion contained therein may need a review in the light of latest developments.

So far as current events are concerned you are more conversant with them than I can ever be, but my feeling is that the Kashmir case has acquired a new complexion. In the context of partition, India's case was much weaker and most of the argument sounded hollow. It looked very hard to argue that once a principle was accepted for the rest of the country an exception should be made in the case of Kashmir. But the recent indo-Pakistan conflict has brought out the fallacies of partition into further lime light. Willy nilly India has to take its stand more and more on secularism and democracy, in word and in deed, and willy nilly again Pakistan has to expose its sectarian character by laying greater and still greater emphasis on religion. In the context of Hindu versus Muslim, India was in an awkward position but in the ideological conflict between secularism and democracy versus theocracy and dictatorship India's case is much stronger. Prejudice dies hard but in the end enlightened opinion is bound to favour the Indian stand. With the mixed character of Indian population in which 50 million Muslims are a sizable fraction, the opinion of people living in this State can legitimately be dubbed as irrelevent and dismissed as parochial.

There is no doubt that the poisonous propaganda from Pakistan which is always interested in stressing hatred and disagreement more than co-existence between different communities has further antagonized the middle class Muslims of the State against India but under the present conditions some amount of "repression" could not be avoided provided that more fundamental ideals are ultimately preserved not only in theory but in actual practice. Time alone will show how far the present profession of Indian leaders will stand the test of history in days to come. The internal forces of Hindu communalism are to be irradicated as ruthlessly as the Panislamic forces of external aggression and fanaticism. I wonder if you have noticed how far Pakistan has gone on Iqbalian lines and

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how much it has drifted away from the path of democracy and tolerance. The utterances of its topmost leaders have revealed how deep the fascist doctrines of the national philosopher have deprived them of their balance. The rest after hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,
K. L. Kaul

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F/8, Hauz Khas
New Delhi
10 November 1965

Shri Kanhaya Lal Kaul
Advocate
Baramulla (Kashmir)

Dear brother,

Many thanks for your letter of the second November which I received only last night. You have acknowledged one of my letters though I despatched two. However, that isold story now.

Your letter is full of wishful thinking and I am afraid it is difficult for me to agree with you; indeed, it seems to me that your thinking is heavily influenced by the current nationalist upsurge and you have unhappily lost firm grasp of the events and developments which previously characterised your approach to State politics.

I do not think that India's Kashmir case has become stronger in any way. In fact, the issue has become more complicated and is fraught with graver consequences. I disagree with the contention that Kashmir people are now out of the picture. I believe in the last analysis it is they who will matter and therefore India's policy in ignoring them and adopting measures to alienate them, is stupid. The only remark in your letter which is most sensible is that India shall have to prove by deeds and not by words that she standt by the ideals of secularism and democracy in the days to come. You rightly say; "the internal forces of Hindu communalism are to be encountered as ruthlessly as panislamic forces." If I understand the

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Hindu mentality, India will not be able to do this under the present leadership. Hence the danger in Kashmir.

This does not mean that I absolve Paisktan of blame nor do I deny that there can be any hesitation in choosing between secularism and religious approach to politics. But if Pakistan is bitter, violent and abusive we cannot ignore the provocation given to her to become so.

Basically, there has been no change in my approach to State politics from what I wrote in the article "The Senseless War and its Lessons". It was liked by friends and others including C. Rajgopalacharya. The Editor *Radical Humanist* was prepared to publish it. But Suyash Malik advised me not to publish it.

I wrote another article "Why Secularism matters in Kashmir" which has been published. I am sending you a copy of the R. H. containing it. You will like the article but I will advise you to read it critically and carefully. The dissent expressed is very mild but in it lies the essence of my thinking.

I wonder if you read my two letters, one in *Hindustan Times* and the other in *Statesman*. I am getting sick with Kashmir affairs and am seriously thinking of devoting the remaining days of my life to the study of culture. I plan to write a book on the "Evolution of Indian Thought and Culture".

Your sincerely
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Baramulla
Kashmir
14th November 1965

*Shri Prem Nath Bazaz*
*F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave*
*New Delhi-16*

*My dear brother,*

*Your letter of 10-11-65 came two days back. My last letter to you was just a routine letter and not a political commentary, much less a premeditated document. But it is such unguarded and unwilling utterances and writings that give a peep into working of one's mind. As such I welcome the criti-*

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cism you have levelled against it. It may be justified agains the contents of the letter but I still maintain that it is a bit hasty if not unjust against my "new orientation" of State politics.

As you know I have no political ambitions in the traditional sense. But in spite of the fact that absolute objectivity is almost a psychological impossibility in so far as we are seldom immune from environmental influence, I try to follow the rules laid down for arriving at the so-called detached results. I have already told you more than once that I am looking at the Kashmir question not in isolation but in the light of pre-partition and post-partition experience. It is just a common place truism that society is not static. If we have discovered flaws and contradictions in the logic of partition it would be dogmatic to take it to its logical limits if by doing so we are certain that it will further complicate the very problems that partition was intended to solve. This is not to say that I advocate a forcible re-union of the sub-continent as Akhand Bhartis may in their myopic approach do. I only say thus far and no further; no more concession to communalism of the Hindu or of the Muslim type.

The real cause of seeming difference probably arises from the fact that though our basic approach to politics is secular and non-religious you must be coming into contact with aggressive Hindu fascist sections who in their narrow-minded way of thinking must be arrogating to themselves the role of dominion vis a vis minorities, particularly Muslims, and giving themselves airs of being conquerors in the recent conflict overestimating their strength and boasting of their supposed victories against a weak neighbour umindful of the fact that past frustation may lead to greater distrust for living and untimately spell disaster to the entire subcontinent by making it an arena of international trial of strength. This must certainty rouse the tiger in you. I am surrounded by the opposite counterpart of this element which can never be convinced that God in his infinite greatness has not assigned the role of civilizing the kafir of the subcontinent to the sacred land of Pakistan. They seem to be certain that even though a bit late the mission of Mahmood

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Gaznavi is bound to be fulfilled by the Pak army sooner or later. It is not difficult to see that both these extreme tendencies verge upon insanity. But after all is said and done there is greater hope of secularism thriving and triumphing in the long run with the Indian official approach rather than by the Pak official approach. When an ideological battle is fought on a very large scale smaller pockets of resistance lose that importance which they have in their own place. It is in this sense that I say that the people of Kashmir are out of the picture even though the drama is going on in their names. No doubt that they will matter but only after their false patrons have been defeated on the battlefield. Their present thinking is undoubtedly clouded. They are in political delirium.

Yours sincerely,

K. L. Kaul

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F/8, Haus Khas Enclave
New Delhi-16
November 20, 1965

Shri K. L. Kaul
Advocate
Baramulla
Kashmir

Dear Brother,

I got your letter of the 14th and the post card of the 15th.

It is true an average man is heavily influenced by environments but not so an intellectual who should have the capacity to look at things detachedly. Despite what you say in justification of your views it seems to me that our reactions to events are dissimilar. While you are coming closer to the Indian nationalist viewpoint I am as far removed from it as ever. The sophisticated arguments and the special pleadings of the Indian leaders please you and you refuse to see that Kashmir is as vital a matter as any other involving the political and human rights of a people. Why in the case of the Kashmiris should we evolve a most complicated and involved reason-

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ing to deprive them of a basic right, escapes my understanding. I have no doubt India would have raised heaven and earth in support of Kashmir's right of self-determination if she were not herself affected by it. Look what India is saying and doing in case of Rhodesia though whites there have a case in the same special way as the Kashmir Hindus.

In your long letter you have made an observation which reveals the core of your mind. You say: "No doubt they (Muslim Kashmiris) will matter but only after their false patrons have been defeated on the battlefield". Now this is exactly what the Indian chauvinists and enemies of Democracy have been yearning all these past months. On a peaceful political plane the rivalry between India and Pakistan is undoubtedly a clash between secular ideal and religious approach to politics or in other words between democracy and dictatorship. But the recent armed conflict was a war between two aggressive nationalisms struggling to dominate each other. No democrat or lover of freedom could have desired the defeat of the one or victory of the other. Do you realize what it would mean had Pakistan been vanquished in the war; it would result in the resurgence of Hindu Imperialism and the end of democracy in whole of Asia. Of course, Pakistan's victory would also have produced an equally disastrous result though in a different way. The entries in my dairy show what restless time I was passing through these few days when the battle was at its worst. Though the fear of a second showdown persists, I am very happy the first ended in a draw in spite of the unfounded claims on both sides.

Be that as it may, I am really sad that you should have lost the rare virtue of examining problems and events dispassionately as you used to do before.

I think that the British and the Americans are honest over Kashmir. Refusing to yield on basic human and moral issues they have been restrained and cautious in expressing their views. That is what democratically inclined people ought to do. I have viewed liberalisation movement in the USSR after Stalin with deep interest and great hope for the future of mankind but regarding Kashmir, I believe, Russian policy has been anything but rational.

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True to their philosophy, the communists never bother about democracy in or outside their own lands; nor do they mind the sufferings of the people. Since India has adopted an anti-democratic and illiberal attitude towards Kashmir the spiritual affinity and political co-operation between Russia and India in this respect is unsurprising.

Russia has always used Kashmir to further her own national interests and to frustrate the designs of her rivals. Previously she had only one rival, U. S. A., in the field, now there is China too. That has necessitated a little change in the Soviet attitude. It is, however, not going to be helpful in any way in the solution of the problem. I am afraid for many years Kashmir issue is bound to cause restlessness, wasteful expenditure and some bloodshed in the Indian sub-continent.

I shall write to you again after I have heard your comments on my latest writings.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Baramulla
Kashmir
22-11-1965

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8 Hauz khas Enclave
New Delhi 16.

My dear brother,

I received your letter and all the enclosures to-day. Before this I got the special issue of *Radical Humanist* containing articles on Kashmir and China in relation to Pakistan and India. Nearly all the articles with varying degrees of shifting emphasis depending on the style and personal predilictions of the writer, were very well written. An article written by R. S. Yadav before the recent cease-fire appealed to me very much.

I read your articles ("why secularism" and "senseless War") as carefully as I could with my impaired objectivity and I

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do not think there is much difference in the subject matter and its treatment. Even the larger dose of criticism contained in the unpublished article could have been easily swallowed by the Indian Government and the nationalist public if it had been published because there are compensatory factors.

While reading your articles I was all along wondering where exactly we disagree. The difficulty may arise when you stick to one opinion which cannot be reconciled with another. Taken out of their context there are passages in your articles which by virtue of their journalistic flexibility and diplomatic quibbling can be utilized by any of the participants in the conflict to support his viewpoint right from an ultranationalist Indian, a radical, a communist, a janasanghi, a socialist, a swatantrist, a J. P, Narayanist on the Indian side and from a staunch Iqbalist, and aggressive Pan Islamist to a Radical humanist on the Pakistan side.

So far as broad aspects of the main controversy are concerned your verdict favours India. If I have not misread the articles, they can be summarized in the form of following propositions :

1. Out of the two ideologies i.e. secular and religious the former is modern and the latter is medieval.

2. Pakistan is responsible for the present conflict and has commenced the hostility by sending infiltrators.

3. That India was justified in resorting to military acts in defending her defacto frontiers.

4. That India has a large stake in defending her socio-economic system and her political ideals.

5. That India is democratic in its constitution and Pakistan totalitarian.

6, That Indian Muslims stood by India in her hour of trial.

7. That Kashmir Muslims who have a peaceful and secular heritage also, on the whole, were not swept off their feet by the bellicosity of Pakistan and did not respond to the call of religious fanaticism though they have their own grievances against the Indian Government and its local representatives.

In the context of war and its background and as a postscript to your earlier writings (covering the period immedi-

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ately preceding and following partition), your articles indicate a very wide departure from the earlier stand at least so far as emphasis is concerned. From the broader Indo-Pak context the subject has come down to Kashmir nationalism and grievances the Kashmiris have against the rest of India. This is quite understandable because very few people in India or Pakistan can speak with as much authority about the past and present of Kashmir as you can. No one can doubt your concern and solicitude for the Kashmir people in shaping whose destiny you have played a vital role. You can still exercise a very healthy influence in the politics of this State but only when you have a say in its affairs. When your very physical existence on the soil is not assured, I wonder how your lifelong experience and keen insight in dealing with indigenous problems (which in their very nature are bound to be peculiar in various respects) can be of any avail to your homeland. I am no briefholder of Shastri or of Sadiq. They may have pursued wrong policies from time to time when dealing with grave situations and after the event it might be possible to point out the errors. But one has to take decisions and implement them so long as one is to carry out a set policy of administration. Very often it happens that so long as one is not in office one is liable to run down the Government for many acts of omission and commission which one would not be able to avoid when in office. One need not be a warmonger to justify resort to arms when war is thrust on a country, nor would it be fair to dub a Government as being power drunk or undemocratic if it resorts to repression to suppress elements which threaten the very existence of the State.

Some times it becomes difficult for a political theoritician to associate himself with the repressive measures employed by a government in dealing with an abnormal situation, but one need not be a reactionary to hold that even a democrat has to be firm and somewhat rough while maintaining the rule of law. Our social evolution being at a comparatively less advanced level and bureaucratic tradition being very deep-rooted in our soil, the official machinery very often overdoes things. Even in so-called advanced democratic countries rebellions have got to be quelled from time to time.

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My own view is that minor excesses apart, the central as well as the State Governments could not have dealt with the situation that was created by the recent crisis differently from what would have been done by any other group in power. In the course of administration mistakes are inevitable. History is yet to pass its verdict on the Kashmir question and it is really too early to say what shape things will take even with best brains at the helm of affairs. The present is very largely an outcome of the past and future will be the outcome of the present. There are actors in the drama on whom not only you and me but even an influential personality like Lord Russel has no control. We can only lament over past mistakes and tender advice about the future.

The sentence which seems to have hurt you in my letter only meant that so long as Kashmiris are being incited as Muslims and not as men and women they are not in a position to think as coolly as their own traditions would impel them to do. Feelings having been roused on irrational issues, the desires of Kashmiris are very much similar to that of Indians in the last War when they wished the Axis to win and Allies to be defeated. Even the best intellectuals were led astray. I believe that the victory of Pakistan with its present slogans would be a victory of stark reaction. This is not to say that all Pakistanis are reactionaries and all Indians are humanists. In a war of ideals you have to see the declared war aims and respective ideologies of the contending parties. They have a commitment value for future.

Yours sincerely,
K. L. Kaul

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
NEW DELHI-16
2nd December 1965

Shri K. L. Kaul
Advocate
Baramulla, Kashmir

Dear Brother,

After reading your letter of the 22nd ultimo I am not inclined to change my view that for the present we may only agree to disagree.

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The inferences you have drawn from my recent writings are superficial and inaccurate calculated to support your views. But they do not fully represent my opinions. I shall be very sad if Kashmir goes to Pakistan but if the alternative is the brutal and inhuman repression of Kashmiris to crush their spirit by the armed might of India, I shall unhesitatingly prefer the former to the latter.

It is significant that of all the many contributions which appeared in the Special Number of the *Radical Humanist* you have "very much" appreciated the article of R. S. Yadav who is generally known to be prone to the nationalist viewpoint among the Radicals. The democratic and humanist method of solving Indo-Pak problems, including Kashmir dispute, has been, I think, fearlessly expressed by Sib Narayan Ray and Raojibai Patel.

However, I have said all that I had to say on the subject and you know it now. We can do no more for the present than adhere to our respective views and keep our minds open for new light.

With warmest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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Baramulla,
Kashmir
6th December 1965

Shri Prem Nath Bazaz
F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave
New Delhi- 16

Dear Brother,

The subject matter of your last pamphlet on "The Shape of things in Kashmir" in the series "Let us think" has assumed a somewhat controversial complexion in my mind. It is, no doubt, analytical, bold, considerably balanced and thought-provoking, but it contains contradictions which are not so patent on the surface. I shall try to pen down below my reactions to this document and leave it to you to judge how far my approach to it is faulty or otherwise.

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I want to make it clear at once that for sometime past certain experiences have affected my capacity to look at the Kashmir question objectively, but, being conscious of this factor, I shall make a voluntary effort to counteract my bias while dealing with the subject.

In the background of pre-partition and post-partition politics of the subcontinent, Kashmir cannot be considered in isolation. As such, the original analysis which led us to support the partition of the subcontinent needs re-examination.

In this context the genesis of Pakistan of which the intellectual foundations were laid by late Dr. Mohammed Iqbal, now acclaimed as the official philosopher of that country, the long drawn battles of Congress and Muslim league on the ideological front, the futile attempts of the former to sponsor and patronize parallel Muslim parties such as Momins Conference, Jamiatul-Ulema, Red Shirts and others to "represent" the Muslims, the tooth-and-nail opposition of the Congress press to the very idea of partition, the innumerable abortive attempts to bring the two contending forces together, are all facets of contemporary history too recent in point of time to be lost sight of.

Despite the tons of money that Congress spent in keeping Kashmiris on its side, right from the year 1938 when the Nationalist Movement officially took birth in this State, the doggedness with which Nehru followed up the policy of befriending Kashmir Muslims and the humiliating experiences he had to meet with during the stormy days of "Quit Kashmir" agitation, the eventual installation of his proteges in power, the unending flow of Indian resources into the State and the final outcome of all these attempts at "ideological conversion" are too patent to be forgotten. After all is said and done, the ugly fact remains that in actual practice, by and large, the two communities are today as isolated from each other as ever. The logic which led to the partition of the country is still there and all attempts at winning over the allegiance of the Muslims of Kashmir, or even for that matter of the rest of India, appears to be foredoomed to failure.

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My own view is that unless and until we arrive at the conclusion that the whole question of partition needs reconsideration in retrospect, our original analysis contained in your books, *History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir*, *Azad Kashmir*, and other writings on the subject of accession, is still quite valid and that there is no need for "reconsidering" the approach to the Kashmir problem. The verdict is already there and no amount of verbal jugglery can wipe it out. If the question is still open and the people of Kashmir are to decide it, it is sheer waste of time to expect that they will change within a forseeable period and swing over their loyalites to India by any amount of cajoling, pampering, appeasement or "sweet-reasonableness." That would be asking them to repudiate their faith in Islam and to accept Hinduism or its modified and disguised variant instead. Gandhi and his adherents have tried it and failed. If by confusing the issues in 1947 there was any doubt in the minds of wishful thinkers who allowed themselves to be misled by the seeming popularity of Sheikh Abdullah and treated it as the popularity of the Congress ideology in Kashmir, that doubt now stands completely dispelled. You and I know it more than many others that the so-called popularity of the hero of that period was partly stage-managed and due to popular ignorance of "real issues" involved. Even within the narrow sphere of State politics, ironically enough, it was not altogether devoid of its communal flavour for the common Muslim insofar as the Hindu Maharaja was ostensibly ousted by the Sheikh.

The swift march of events did not allow the ignorant masses of this God-forsaken part of the subcontinent to see things in their wider perspective and those who could see ahead were either gagged, persecuted or physically removed from the scene. With the passage of time the issues became crystal clear to all and sundry. Thus, looking at the matter from a formal democratic view we should be jolly glad that we, unlike the extolled heroes, could foresee things and that our stand is being vindicated by History. We should boldly advocate Kashmir's accession to Pakistan, at any rate the grant of the right of self-determination to Kashmiris regardless

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of the fact where our own interests as members of a minority community lie.

My own changed approach to the problem arises from the belated realisation that partition of the subcontinent was indeed a grievous mistake. It was supported by us primarily as a solution of the communal problem in India, but in actual practice it has proved as a support to the monster of Muslim communalism; partly perhaps we could not gauge the extent of poison that had gone down in the Muslim mind by the Pan-islamic fascist teachings of Iqbal and his contemporary collaborators and partly the newly born State of Pakistan has since then unfolded its potentialities which we used to minimize in those days. It has now, besides landing itself in dictatorship, come out openly as a theocratic authoritarian State with no tolerance whatsoever for unorthodox viewpoints even within the fold of Islam. The treatment of Ahmedis some years back and a standing shadow of persecution hanging over other minority sects of the Muslim community, is sufficiently symptomatic of the malady that has set in there. Assurances of equality before the law which were given to non-Muslims by late Mr. Jinnah and his successors in office, Liyaqatali and Khwaja Nazimuddin, have proved illusory and deceptive and have now been unabashedly thrown to the winds by the rulers of that country which takes pride in calling itself as the biggest Islamic State of the world.

It would be simply academic to argue as to what would have happened if India had not resisted the annexation of Kashmir by Pakistan in 1947. Like that it might be useful to examine that possibly partition itself might have been averted if the entire Congress leadership were really secular in outlook so as to inspire an equal amount of confidence in all communities. But this is beside the point now.

We have to take things as they are and not as they ought to be or might have been with better handling. In practical politics, I believe, choice arises from comparison. We have seen that both the camps are dominated by the religious mode of thought. The much extolled Gandhism is nothing but a modified version of Hinduism with "Ram Rajya" as its ideal.

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It is not for nothing that Gandhi rose in the estimation of Hindus to those heights to which he did, that he was so allergic to the rise of Muslim Nationalism as a separate political entity in Indian political life and that organisationally Patel with his pronounced Hindu leanings, was the strong man of the Congress. Again, it was not merely a coincidence that Muslims of India responded so favourably to the counter-revolutionary preachings of League politicians and rallied so rapidly to their banner. But there is one important distinction between the two camps. While the mainstay of League politics was wholly and solely Islam (the single largest cementing factor in its rank and file), the Congress on the contrary was a conglomeration of diverse political trends, to a large extent dominated by Hindu outlook under the Mahatamic influence on the one hand, yet representing secular tendencies under the influence of Nehru, on the other.

As things are, we have to see if in the Congress ideology as represented by Nehru and his successors in outlook, there is any hope of secularism ever becoming real in India. There are obviously two powerful tendencies dominant in the Indian political scene. One for historical reasons is the natural and age-old tendency of Hindu domination and Hindu revivalism which is in essence more or less antagonistic to Muslims, and the other one is the more liberal, more modern, more seasoned, less communal and approximately secular tendency which has so far held the field, at least constitutionally. If we believe that out of the two ideologies, that is the out-and-out religious one and the other liberal one, the latter is more conducive to the ultimate good of Kashmiris and which by virtue of its indisputably superior logic, is more likely to triumph decisively in the long run, then we should not make a fetish of the so-called democratic practice. After all if India is a "Hindu State" then the problem of minorities can never be satisfactorily solved, even if Kashmir is formally detached from it or handed over to Pakistan. Justice will still have to be secured for five crore and odd Muslims, so many Harijans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis and others.

I think the problem of sub-nationalities and cultural minorities stands on an independent footing and is to be

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separately tackled in a scientific manner. Independent or semi-independent status for Kashmir is no solution for the bigger problem. Even after fuller integration of this State within the Indian constitutional frame work the problem of making secularism genuine and universally victorious in India—whether through the medium of Congress or some other party—still remains. The aspirations of Punjabis, Bengalis, Madrasis, and Kashmiris etc. as such (and not as Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and so on) have still to be satisfied. If you think Kashmir has a special case or should enjoy a special status because it is predominantly Mussalman you are unwittingly supporting the Pakistan stand by necessary implication and doing incalculable disservice to the cause of secularism.

If really you subscribe to the two nation theory in effect and still consider the partition of the country as a solution of the communal problem, then you have to devise in due course a formula for the exchange of population and keep in mind the possibility of facing a multinational problem in the near future.

It may be recalled incidently that Russians after the revolution were confronted with a problem very much similar to ours, but it seems that under the leadership of Stalin they have provided a better solution of the minority problems and solved it in a more rational manner by giving sufficient cultural and linguistic autonomy to its constituent units under a strong centre.

The problem of accommodating different nationalities within a larger federation is not new to History. So long as federal states exist such problems always arise and have to be solved in a scientific manner. In composite states denial of the right of cessation to federating units is necessarily incidental. Pakistan would not be willing to concede the right of self-determination to the Pukhtoons, Buloches, Sindhis, Punjabis, or Bengalis even in theory should they ever dare to demand it nor would USA allow its components to disintegrate.

If you can prove that India is treating Kashmir as a "colony", as we understand the term, it is a different matter. In that case you can certainly denounce it.

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I repeat that if on principle you still believe that Kashmiris possess the inalienable right of deciding their future then fixing a time limit for an uncertain existence is meaningless.

The right has already been withheld long enough i. e., for nineteen years, why prolong suspense and agony? If on the contrary you think that under the present confused conditions and the powerful religious pull fanatically maintained from across the border they are bound to make a wrong choice like the misguided people who out of sheer ignorance would oppose inoculation, vaccination, birth control, or universal education as an encroachment on their "individual liberty" and would outvote those who stand for it, then it is your duty to resist by all means such a retrograde attempt on their part. A mobocratic approach will not do.

Once upon a time we had a good yard-stick to measure the soundness or otherwise of a political decision. If a step, though apparently reactionary, was objectively (rather potentially) progressive in character we supported it. If on the contrary it did not further the cause of revolution, as we understood it then, we opposed it. But now we have become objectionably liberal in outlook to the extent of welcoming naked reaction in the name of democracy.

I should not be understood to mean that, despite its shortcomings, there is anything necessarily wrong in this approach or that this is not a recognized political practice. In fact, the whole fabric of Parliamentary democracy rests on the doctrine that man has a fundamental right to determine his destiny; he has, that is to say, the right to take a right as well as a wrong decision. Right to err is indeed inherent in this doctrine. But democracy has also become a controversial expression. My only contention is that if you swear by formal democracy then there is no moral justification to postpone or delay the right of the Kashmiris to exercise their birth-right. There is no moral sanction for keeping it in abeyance for a decade or more as you have suggested. Section 370 or no Section 370, it is exclusively their business to decide their future here and now. You have made certain recommendations in the

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concluding part of your thesis in such a way as if a majority of Kashmiris is agreeable to your formula and as if they were a willing party to the actions of Constitution-makers when Section 370 was enacted and are now lamenting over its arbitrary withdrawal by India. The position is that they are being made to look at the whole "game" as a colossal fraud *ab initio* perpetrated upon them by the greedy, power-thirsty Hindus who had all along their covetous eyes on their beautiful homeland and wanted to grasp it by hook or by crook, putting forward a show boy of secularism like Nehru to entrap the poor, unwary and unsophisticated Sheikh. This belief cannot be easily eradicated from their minds. The more India tries to appease them the more they will treat it as political bribery and the more it tries to suppress them through its "local agents" the more they will be drawn towards the opposite camp with greater moral fervour and still more convinced about the "wicked" designs of India. This is a varitable viscious circle wherefrom there appears no exit.

In a moment of crisis you cannot sidetrack the basic issue. You cannot bypass the question of accession by simply playing to the gallery; you have got to give a straight reply to a straight question. If it is democratic and morally sound that Kashmiris have the primary right to decide their future then no quibbling is permissible. You have got to follow the rules of the game faithfully and not only concede without reservations but advocate boldly and conscientiously their right even if it means causing the displeasure of some elements or even if it perhaps lands you into trouble under DIR for undertaking this noble though risky and thankless task. If nothing, you shall at least have done justice to your conscience. If like myself you come to the conclusion that partition was a mistake, that on the whole there are better chances of democracy and secularism thriving in India than in Pakistan which has not developed on the lines as we had mistakenly (though not altogether without some basis) envisaged in the beginning and that it has belied the expectations of all the progressive elements the world over, that it will take ages to undo the wrong done to the people of that country, that it is for the ultimate good of Kashmiris (regardless of

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their present inclinations) to remain with the Indian Union and that their disassociation from it will not only spell disaster to them in the end but also magnify the problems of political elements working for the establishment of secularism in India a hundred fold and pave the way for a naked fascist dictatorship of Hindu reaction thereby putting Indian minorities in jeopardy, then you should not feel shy of saying so. It is probably on such occasions that the maxim of end justifying the means has some application.

I do not want to create an impression that I have (as you once remarked) lost faith in human nature or that there are not some fine souls in all the camps who, despite their leanings to one religion or another, have an appreciable amount of humanist essence in their dispositions, but, unfortunately, such people are at the moment very infinitesimal in number and can at best be characterized as the leaders of tomorrow. But of one thing I am sure that, relatively speaking, humanists exist in all communities which can be counted upon as a balancing factor for preventing Indian public life from coming under the complete dominance of Hindu reactionaries. If such a calamity cannot be prevented then before long problems of much greater magnitude will have to be faced than can be imagined at the moment.

Yours sincerely,
K. L. Kaul

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F/8, Hauz Khas Enclave,
New Delhi-16
December 12, 1965

Shri K. L. Kaul
Advocate
Baramulla (Kashmir)

Dear Brother,

I have now received your letter dated the 6th December 1965 and very carefully gone through it. Obviously you have taken pains to put down your views on the Kashmir problem in a systematic form and I am glad you have done so.

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It is gratifying to find that our analysis of the political trends and developments in India and Pakistan before and after 1947, is very much similar, though I do not think that we ever believed the partition of the subcontinent could solve the communal problem. We were of the opinion that so long as the liberals like Pheroze Shah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal Krishan Gokhle and others led Indian politics the *approach was secular* but after the First World War India's freedom struggle was conducted by the National Congress under the banner of Gandhism which is a religio-political philosophy. The change therefore gradually alienated the non-Hindu minorities especially the Muslims from the mainstream of politics ; they mostly refused to actively participate in the freedom struggle and went into opposition, the partition therefore became inevitable. Even so, we were of the opinion that the partition would be unfortunate and fraught with gave risks but that under the circumstances then prevailing in the country it could not be avoided ; if resisted, it might lead to prolonged civil war, misery and bloodshed ; it would also give a new lease of life to British Imperialism. Of course, we had fervently hoped that in post-independence era after partition progressive forces in both the countries would assert themselves and with passage of time the communal problem would lose importance and appeal as it had in pre-1947 days.

As I have often stated in the past months during discussions with friends in the Valley as well as in my writings, I believe that though Indian politics is still not free from revivalist overtones and religious bias, the Constitution prepared, debated upon and adopted by the Indian Constituent Assembly inspires hope that the Indian society is, despite strong reactionary pulls, keen to shed the outmoded notions, demolish prejudices and attain the goal of a secular democratic state. To me the adoption of the Constitution by the accredited representatives of the people professing diverse faiths and belonging to different castes is a historic event of profound significance. In contrast to it, Pakistan is being frankly and consciously built as a religious State on the foundations of discarded medieval conceptions ; by and large Pakistanis have lost the courage to face *mullaism*

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and enter the modern age of science and progress. Besides, the country's government has actually assumed the form of a military dictatorship which is an antithesis of democracy. For these reasons, I have arrived at the conclusion that Kashmir should remain with India and Kashmiris should reject the idea of acceding to Pakistan. For, after all, I did not fight for political and economic freedom of Kashmir only to find the country ultimately absorbed by a theocratic dictatorship. During the last 37 years I have cherished the ideal of a secular democratic state and devotedly laboured to see Kashmir growing into one. I continue to have this goal undiminished in my view.

Nevertheless, I do not agree with you when you say that "we should not make a fetish of the so-called democratic practices." Merely because I strongly believe India to be a secular state and Pakistan a military dictatorship, I will not support the plan that the Kashmiris should be forced by armed might to remain with India. To me that would be repulsive and substitution of unbridled Dogra autocracy by new despotism untenable by any standard of justice and freedom. It should be, in my opinion, the free choice of the Kashmiris to dicide where they want to be.

We have consistently in the past stressed the importance of democratic practices and of the moral means to achieve a desirable aim. I am therefore surprised to hear you saying that "it is probably on such occasions that the maxim of end justifying the means has some application". Your argument smacks of communist morality which I have never been able to appreciate. For me the end is nothing but the culmination of a process called the means. Therefore starting with anti-democratic practices we cannot reasonably expect to arrive at the goal of democracy as you seem to imagine.

Perhaps from this difference in the method of application of moral principles stems our different solutions of the Kashmir problem. I staunchly hold that in order to achieve a noble goal means employed should be unexceptionable. If our aim is to establish democracy in Kashmir it can be done only by application of democratic practices from the inception

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that is by securing the willing consent of the Kashmiris and not by imposing any solution on them, however right, sensible or progressive it may be in our eyes.

I have hopes based on the knowledge of essential character of the Kashmiris and varied experience of State politics, that if the Indian policy could be more enlightened and Hindu communalism checked, secular democratic ideal would emerge triumphant in Kashmir and in the long run State people would not fail to appreciate the benefits that association with India would confer on them. You will pardon me if I say that your pessimism betrays a woeful lack of faith in the potentialities of democracy in practice. But in any case it is impossible for me to conceive that suppression of a people's free thought and imposition of a system and an administration disliked by them, can lead to the establishment of social democracy in Kashmir. Apart from being morally assailable, it is not even practical politics as has been proved more than once by happenings and developments in Kashmir during the past nineteen years.

We are fully entitled to our way of thinking, hold any views on Kashmir problem we like and to persuade the Kashmiris to be rational and to carefully weigh the pros and cons of the issue, but the final decision must rest with the people.

I entertain some doubts regarding the right of self-determination being conducive to human happiness in every case, but so long as we sincerely believe Democracy to be the best form of Government in the contemporary world, there is no honesty in depriving the Kashmiris of the opportunity to make their free choice about the future of the state. So long as the Constitution is in existence and remains the fountain-head of law to govern every field of her social life, India cannot be, in fairness, dubbed a Hindu State. But it is well to remember that the principles enshrined in the Constitution are the only common ground between India and Kashmir. Realizing this, we should not overlook the differences in sentiments and emotions which are generated by association with past historical events. Not unoften public affairs and even

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official policies in India tend to be influenced by Hindu beliefs, customs and traditions. The irrational demand for complete ban on cow slaughter and forcible imposition of Hindi are instances in point. We are in a transition period and this attitude may be a passing phase. But we cannot afford to ignore or underrate this tendency and the reaction of Muslim mind to it. Therefore until secular philosophy is effectively practised in India it is prudent to allow the Kashmiri Muslims to enjoy fullest autonomy in managing their internal affairs in accordancc with their cultural beliefs and past traditions. This is no advocacy of two-nation theory, but recognition of a stern reality. To be dogmatic, doctrinaire and exacting in our attitude towards Muslims on the other hand is to invite the same disaster as was witnessed in 1947.

You say that if I believe in "the inalienable right of the Kashmiris to decide their future then fixing of a time limit for an uncertain existence is meaningless". You have in effect accused me of trying to prevaricate. I plead not guilty to the charge. What I point out and stress is that the case of secularism and democracy has gone by default in Kashmir. It is argued that the task of making the State people conversant with the lofty principles underlying the philosopy of secularism has been done, and indeed overdone, by the Congress leaders and their favourites in the State. This is not true. Neither has the philosophy of secularism been intelligently explained to the Kashmiris nor has democracy been given a chance to assert itself in the State. What the Kashmiris have unfortunately known and experienced under India is incessant oppression and repression which has created a false and ugly image of Indian democracy in their mind. When therefore I suggest that sufficient time and full opportunity should be given to present the case of secularism and democracy in the true light, I have no desire to be evasive nor do I feel afraid of the adverse verdict that the Kashmiris might give; only I do not share your impatience that the decision should be hustled through.

You seem to have conveniently borrowed from the nationalists a few of the arguments in support of the suppression of free will in Kashmir, without testing their validity.

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I believe that no central Government can hold for long a unit when for substantial reasons the latter believes the union to be harmful and is bent upon severing its connection with it. I may however concede that constitutionally the federation will be justified in disallowing secession. But a federation's right to reject the unit's demand for secession in any case flows from the fact that the latter originally accepted to join of its free accord. In the case of Kashmir, as you know, India cannot validly advance that claim.

I have no desire to discuss other points raised in your letter because they have been already dealt with in our previous correspondence nor they are of much importance.

Yours sincerely,
Prem Nath Bazaz

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